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THE
WORKS
OF
PLATO
MK ABRIDG'D.

WITH
An Account of his Life, Philosophy, Morals, and Politicks.

Together with a Translation of
his choicest Dialogues, *viz.*

- Of { 1. Human Nature, | 5. What one ought to do.
2. Prayer, | 6. Immortality of the Soul,
3. Wisdom, | 7. Valour,
4. Holiness, | 8. Philosophy.

In Two Volumes.

Illustrated with Notes. By M. DACIER.

Translated from the *French*.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N;

Printed for A. Bell, at the Cross-Keys and Bible in
Cornhill, near Stocks-Market, 1701.

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VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed for A. Hall, at the Office and Library
of the British Museum, 1753.

A
T A B L E
O F T H E
D I A L O G U E S

Contained in these two Volumes.

V O L. I.

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T H E

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Contained in three Volumes

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P L A T O.

WHat is every Day seen to befall the Noblest Houses, whose Great Names are usurp'd by obscure Families, so that the true Heirs who only have right to bear 'em are in time no longer distinguished, has been the fate of Philosophy. A great number of Arts and Sciences which indeed may be of use in their places, but are worthy only to be the Slaves of that Science which alone renders our Lives equally good and happy, have seiz'd on this Magnificent Name, and render'd it contemptible in the Eyes of Men. We have now no Idea of a true Philosopher, since this August Title is lavishly bestowed on a sort of curious and lazy People, who make it their only business to understand some of the secrets of Nature, and spend the time of their Life in making Experiments on the weight of the Air, and the virtues of the Loadstone. This Name has been still more degrad'd in being given to those, whose insatiable Avarice chains 'em Day and Night to a Furnace; as if Gold, the greatest quantity of which is not comparable to the least Vertue, were the end of Philosophy. In fine Men are not content with having given it such blemishes as these, but have also render'd the Name

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odious in throwing it away on those Libertines, who by a pretended *Force d'Esprit*, or strength of Thought, which at bottom is no better than Weakness and Ignorance, live rather like Beasts than Men. Is it then to be wonder'd at that Philosophy is mistaken and neglected, and that Men no longer pay her that respect and veneration, which she formerly excited in their Minds? Asham'd of being confounded with the Daughters of the Earth, she is reascended to Heaven, from whence *Socrates* brought her.

The Athenians heretofore by a publick decree forbad, that the Names of *Harmodius*, and *Aristogiton*, who had deliver'd their Countrey from the Tyranny of *Hippias* and *Hipparchus*, should ever be given to Slaves: for they thought it a horrible Indignity by so shameful a Communication to blast those Names that were devoted to the publick Liberty. Philosophy is another Deliverer, she triumphs over Vices, overthrows Impiety, and confounds the Wisdom of the World. 'Tis somewhat greater than the Arts, and than what Men commonly call the Sciences; 'tis the love of true Wisdom, the knowledg of Divine and Humane Things, that is to say, the Science of God, a Science which teaches us to know the relation which our Souls necessarily bear to their Creator, and by and in him, to all rational Creatures, and which produces the certain knowledge of all our Duties, towards God, our Neighbours and our Selves.

To be truly a Philosopher is to have Temperance, Justice and Fortitude, to love the Truth, to avoid Sensual Pleasures, to despise Riches, to weaken, as much as may be, the bands that fasten the Soul to the Body, to hate and condemn this Body which is always opposing Wisdom, to renounce all our Desires, to fear neither the Poverty, nor Shame, nor Reprcach we may be expos'd to, for the sake of Righteousness and Truth; to do good to Mankind even our very Enemies: to have nothing in view,
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bnt how to die well ; and for this end to renounce one's self and every thing else. This is the Idea the wisest Heathens had of Philosophy.

This being suppos'd, nothing can be more fit and useful, than to follow the certain, and visible Progress which they made in their research after those Truths, and to see to what degree of knowledge it pleased God to lead 'em. If we don't make such an Examen as this, we can't speak of 'em with Judgment, and without falling into a false account of Things, as it has often happen'd, and still happens every day to the most Learned Men. Whenever they speak of the Heathens, they bear witness against themselves that they never well read 'em, and that they have only an imperfect Idea of 'em, for they impute such Sentiments to 'em as they never had, and deny 'em others which they had in reality ; which is a great piece of Injustice : nay it seems (if I may so speak) to diminish somewhat from the Mercy and Justice of God, not to acknowledg all the Testimonies he was pleased to give of himself among the Pagans, in those Times that were corrupted with the most abominable Idolatry, in order to reduce 'em to the true Religion.

This Negligence is the more blamable ; in that a Man needs only to read *Plato*, to be perfectly inform'd of the extent of their Knowledge : For his Writings have amass'd together all the Truths that were scatter'd up and down in the Works of other Philosophers ; and with the advantage of new Discoveries of his own, they compose as it were a Body of Doctrine which contains the highest perfection of Knowledge to be found among the Heathens.

Let a Man read never so little of him with attention, and reflect upon what he teaches, and he'll easily discern, that God, to stop the mouth of Incredulity, was long since preparing the way for the conversion of the Heathens, which had been so often predicted by the Prophets ; for was it not the work of God, and a kind of Preludium of their

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Conversion, that a Heathen in the most Idolatrous City in the World, and almost 400 years before the light of the Gospel illuminated the Universe, should declare and prove a good part of the Truths of the Christian Religion.

The Circumstance of the Time is remarkable, for Plato began to write immediately after the three last Prophets that were in *Israel*. So that as soon as the Prophets ceased among the Jews, God raises up Philosophers to enlighten the Gentiles; and divers of the Principles of the Gospel are taught at *Athens*. Where 'tis prov'd,

That there is but one God, that we ought to love and serve him, and to endeavour to resemble him in Holiness and Righteousness; that this God rewards Humility, and punishes Pride.

That the true Happiness of Man consists in being united to God, and his only Misery in being separated from him.

That the Soul is mere Darknes, unless it be illuminated by God; that Men are uncapable even of praying well, unless God teaches 'em that Prayer, which alone can be useful to 'em.

That there is nothing solid and substantial but Piety, that this is the Source of Vertues, and that it is the gift of God.

That 'tis better to die than to sin.

That we ought continually to be learning to die, and yet to endure life, in obedience to God.

That 'tis a Crime to hurt our Enemies, and to revenge our selves for the Injuries we have received.

That 'tis better to suffer wrong than to do it.

That God is the sole Cause of Good, and cannot be the Cause of Evil, which always proceeds only from our Disobedience, and the ill use we make of our Liberty.

That Self-love produces that Discord and Division which reign among Men, and is the cause of their Sins; that the love of our Neighbours, which proceeds from the love of God as its Principle, produces that sacred Union which makes Families, Republicks, and Kingdoms happy.

That

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That the World is nothing but Corruption, that we ought to fly from it, to join our selves to God, who alone is our Health and Life; and that while we live in this World we are surrounded by Enemies, and have a continual Combate to endure, which requires on our part a resistance without intermission; and that we cannot conquer, unless God or his Angels come to our help.

That the WORD fram'd the World, and render'd it visible; that the knowledg of the WORD makes us live very happily here below, and that thereby we obtain Felicity after Death.

That the Soul is immortal, that the Dead shall rise again, that there shall be a final Judgment both of the Righteous and of the Wicked, when Men shall appear only with their Vertues or Vices, which shall be the occasion of their eternal Happiness or Misery.

But I forbear to proceed, that I may not repeat that here, which will be found in its full extent elsewhere. Yet I cannot chuse but add, that *Plato* had so great and true an Idea of perfect Righteousness, and was so thoroughly acquainted with the corruption of Mankind, that he makes it appear, * that if a Man perfectly righteous should come upon Earth, he would find so much opposition in the World, that he would be imprison'd, reviled, scourg'd, and in fine crucified by such who, tho they were extremely wicked, would yet pass for righteous Men. *Socrates* was the first proof of this Demonstration. For as *St. Justin* says, the Devils seeing this Philosopher made their Nullity appear by the discovery of the Truth, and that he endeavour'd to reclaim Men from giving them religious Worship; these malicious Spirits so order'd the matter by means of Men who were corrupt and took pleasure in Vice, that this righteous Man was put to Death as if he had been an impious Person, that liv'd without God in World, and introduc'd new Gods.

* In the II. Book of his Common-wealth. Tom. 2.

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There are some who pretend the abovementioned Passage of *Plato* is a Prophecy, because the Terms don't agree with the Circumstances of *Socrates*, who was put to death only by a draught of Poyson, but precisely sute with those of the Saviour of the World, who was both scourged and crucified.

But we shall not presume to make a Prophet of our Philosopher, from whom Reason alone, when mov'd by the injustice of Men, might extort such exaggerated Expressions; but shall content our selves to enquire what there may be in his Writings conformable to the designs of God, who always desir'd the Salvation of Men, and often made use of the Pagans for the execution of his eternal Decrees.

We understand by the Holy Scripture, which is the only Lamp of Truth, that natural Religion was the first use Men made of their Reason; that Lust and irregular Passions having corrupted their Reason, they abandon'd themselves to the sacrilegious worship of Idols; and that God to stop the course of this Abomination made himself known a second time, and gave the Jewish Law; which as it reviv'd in the minds of Men the Principles of the Law of Nature, so it promis'd a more sacred and perfect Covenant which the Righteous were to expect, and which alone was capable of triumphing over Death; and so alone able to conduct Men to a glorious Immortality.

Plato seems to have been acquainted with the Divine Conduct in this matter, and to endeavour to reclaim the Heathens by the same means.

He endeavours to reestablish Natural Religion by opposing Paganism which was the corruption of it.

He gives a Law which in its principal heads is entirely conformable to the Tradition of the Hebrews, and the Precepts of *Moses* and the Prophets; from whom he has borrowed that which is most rational and substantial in his Works.

And he supports this Law by a great many Principles more sublime than those of natural Religion,
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and of the Law of *Moses*; and by clear and express Promises of spiritual and eternal Blessings, which the Christian Religion alone can make Men enjoy, and which *Moses* and the Prophets only promised under the Veil, and Figures of temporal Enjoyments. So that *Plato* is not content to give a Testimony only to natural Religion, and the Jewish Law, but also in some sort pays Homage to Christianity; in piercing by a supernatural Light into a part of those Shadows and Figures that cover'd it; and in proposing most of the greatest Motives and glorious Objects, which it has always employ'd to raise Men above themselves, and to make them Masters of their Passions.

* *A happy Immortality* (says he) *is a great Prize set before us, and a great Object of Hope, which should engage us to labour all the time of our Life to acquire Wisdom and Vertue.* This the reading only of these two first Volumns will compleatly set in its true Light.

'Tis commonly enquir'd on this Subject, how the Books of *Moses* and those of the Prophets could come to *Plato's* knowledg. I will not undertake to prove that there were Greek Translations of 'em before that of the *Septuagint*, 'tis too difficult a matter to support that Supposition, and I must confess I can find no solid foundation for it. But I'll declare what seems most probable to me.

After the departure of the Israelites out of *Egypt*, they almost always continued their Commerce with the Egyptians. They traded in their Country, they sometimes desir'd their assistance against their Enemies, and often enter'd into Treaties and Alliances with them. By these means the memory of all that had happen'd to their Nation was easily preserv'd among those People. † The Captivity of King *Jehoachaz*, whom *Pharaoh Nechoch* carried away Prisoner about the beginning of the 42 Olympiade; and ‡ the dwelling of the Prophets *Jeremiah* and

* Vol. 2. † 2 Kings 23. ‡ Jer. 43.

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Barach in *Egypt* some years after with the miserable remainder of the Jews, that the King of *Babylon* had left in *Judea*, could not suffer the Egyptians to forget these things.

About this time *Pythagoras* travell'd into *Egypt*, from whence he brought these Traditions into *Greece*; his Disciples communicated them to *Socrates*, who acquainted *Plato* with 'em; and he, to be more perfectly instructed in 'em, went to the same place where he might see not only the Grand-Children but the Children of such as had convers'd with the Fugitives that retired thither with those Prophets. And perhaps 'tis no ill-founded Supposition, that by his frequent Conversation with them he learned enough of their Language to read those Originals himself, of which the Egyptians, who were a very curious People, might have Copies. But whether he read 'em, or knew nothing of 'em, but what he learned in Conversation, 'tis certain he could draw that Tradition which he calls *Sacred* from no other Source. For he harmonizes so well with those Originals in many things, not only in respect of the Truths themselves, but moreover in the very manner of his Expressions, that one would often think he translates 'em. From whom, unless from the Hebrews, could the Egyptians have a Tradition containing such wonderful Doctrine, and of which never any other People had heard, before the peculiar People of God were instructed in it?

But 'tis said there are many Errors intermix'd with the Writings of *Plato*; that in his Explication of the greatest Truths, he is full of Doubts and Uncertainty; and 'tis observ'd that *Socrates* constantly professes that *he knows nothing*: What advantage can be received from a man that knows nothing but his own Ignorance? And 'tis fit these Objections should have an Answer.

'Tis certain *Plato* is not without his Errors; but when they come to be strictly examin'd, there are to be found in 'em some Traces of ancient Tradition,

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ons, and Predictions of the Prophets; and if these Traces are compar'd with the Doctrine of the Holy Scripture, one may discover the Source of those Errors, which by this means become one of the Proofs of the Truth of the Christian Religion. For we must be forc'd to acknowledg that the Heathens had a dim sight of divers great Truths, which because they were not to be fully unveiled till the coming of the *Messiah*, were involved in Darkness too thick to be penetrated by their Eyes. And this was predicted by the Prophets, who all declar'd that *Christ should be the Light of the World*. None but Jesus Christ was able to discover to 'em those Mysteries, which were to be kept secret before his coming. Therefore 'tis no very surprizing thing, that such Persons as attempted to penetrate * these Mysteries, only by the Light of their Reason, did evaporate into vain Imaginations. And for this reason we ought not to pretend to give a clear Explanation of the Truths of Religion by the Notions of this Philosopher; but on the contrary should explain his Notions by these Truths, this is the way to display Light every where, and dissipate all Errors. And when his Principles accord well with those Truths, we may with very good advantage make use of the proofs he has given of 'em.

The Doubts and Uncertainty, of which he is reproached, about the most essential Points, are so far from shaking his Principles, that they only give the greater Confirmation to 'em, and one may say that Certainty and Conviction spring from these very Doubts. For instance in his *Phædon*, where he is treating of the great Objects of our Hope in the other Life, he insinuates that 'tis a very difficult matter certainly to know the Truth of these things, while we live here, and that how strong soever the proofs are, on which we may found an

* Such as the Doctrine of the Trinity, the Resurrection, the Fall of Man, and the Creation of the Souls of Men before their Bodies.

Expectation of a happy Eternity, the greatness of the Subject and the natural Infirmities of Man are inexhaustible Springs of Doubts and Uncertainties; for these spring up in multitudes from the stock of corrupt Nature, which opposes the most manifest Truths, and resists the most evident proofs which Reason can produce. What was to be done then to dissipate these Doubts? The Prophets had spoken, but their Oracles were yet obscure, and men might not discern in their Words the Divine Spirit that animated 'em. It was necessary that God himself should speak. Nothing less than an express Promise, nothing less than a plain Divine Revelation could entirely disperse the Clouds of Ignorance and Incredulity, and convert these Doubts into Certainties. This is what * Plato confesses in express Terms. For he brings in some Philosophers that render Homage to God, calling his Promises *the Vessel in which no danger is to be feared, and the only one in which we can happily accomplish the Voyage of this Life, on a Sea so tempestuous and full of Rocks.* Thus we see where his Doubts terminated; they led Men to acknowledg the need they had of a God, to assure 'em of the reality of the great Blessings for which they hop'd. And this is accomplished in the Christian Religion; which as it is the only Religion that has God for its Teacher, so has also the Promises of Eternal Happiness, of which the Prophets spake, and of which Plato had a glimpse; and for which the word of this God, by the confession even of these Pagans, is a most certain Security. So that, by the acknowledgment of the most enlighten'd Heathens, there are now no reasonable Doubts concerning the Truth of the Christian Religion; that being the only Vessel in which we can never be lost. And this is what the Prophets predicted, that in Jesus Christ Life and Immortality should be fully brought to Light, and that he should be the desire of Nations.

* In his Phædon. Vol. 2.

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'Tis not only in these principal Points that *Plato* doubts, but almost in every thing; and his doubts have given occasion to many to make a wrong judgment of the Academick Philosophy; for it has been imagined that it asserted nothing, but accounted all things equally uncertain, which is a very unjust Supposition. *Socrates* and *Plato* were not of the number of those Philosophers, whose fluctuating minds kept 'em continually wandering, so that they had no fix'd and steady Principles. This was their Principle and Rule; They taught that men could not of themselves have any Opinion but what was founded only on Probabilities; but that when God enlighten'd 'em, that which was no more than Opinion before now became Science: And this they explain'd by a pretty Comparifon. *Dedalus* made two sorts of Statues that could walk, with this difference, the one sort had a Spring which stop'd 'em when one pleas'd, and the other had none; so that when they were let go, they run along to the end of their Line, and could not be stop'd. The latter were not of so great a Price, but the former were very dear. Now *Socrates* and *Plato* compar'd Opinion to these Statues, that could not be stop'd; for Opinion is not stable, but is subject to change. but when 'tis restrain'd and fix'd by reasoning drawn from Causes which the Divine Light discovers to us, then Opinion becomes Science, and is fix'd and steady, like those Statues which had that governing Spring added to 'em. So that their meaning was, that Opinion turns only on Probability, which is always like moving Sand, but that Science rests on Certainty and Truth, which are a firm Foundation. Thus *Socrates* and *Plato* disputed about every thing, while they had only Opinions; but when these Opinions after serious researches and long labour, were become Science by the Divine Light; then they affirm'd what they knew. Till then all was doubtful and uncertain to 'em. But these Doubts were more wise and safe than the Arrogance of those
positive.

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positive Philosophers, that rashly affirm'd every thing, and always took Opinion for Science.

The Third Objection against *Socrates*; *That he only knew that he knew nothing*, is no more solid than the former; and is to be answer'd by the same Principle: and if I am not mistaken, we shall find in this Ignorance a marvellous Fund of Knowledg.

There are two sorts of Ignorance, the one Natural, which is good or evil, according to the good or ill use that is made of it, and the other Acquired, and always good: For this latter is the Ignorance of those who after they have learned all that Men can know, are convinc'd that they know nothing. This was *Socrates* his Ignorance, it was * *a learned Ignorance that knows it self*. He had run through Astronomy, Geometry, Physicks, Metaphysicks, Poetry, Polite Learning, &c. and saw the vanity of 'em. He even undertakes to prove that all these Sciences are either useless or dangerous, and that nothing but the knowledg of God can make us happy, that where this Divine Science is not, there can be no Good, and consequently that there is a sort of Ignorance more useful than the Sciences; for this Ignorance seeks not for knowledg in it self, well knowing it has none, but only in God who is pleas'd to fill its *Vacuum*. It was for this reason, *Socrates* always began his Instructions with an Affirmation that he knew nothing. By this he signified that our Souls have no true knowledg of any thing, any farther than they are enlightned by God. That they should always look on that piercing Light, in which alone they can see Light; and that when they turn their Looks another way they necessarily fall back into Obscurity, and produce nothing but the Works of Darknes. Let the Proud Wise Men of the World appear, and compare themselves with this Ignorant Man.

* 'Tis an Expression of *Socrates*, which states two sorts of Ignorance, one that is ignorant of it self, and t'other that knows it self.

So much for one of the uses that may be made of *Plato's* Writings, which ought to be look'd upon as so many Titles belonging to Christianity, found long ago among the Pagans, and are so much the more venerable, in that so much as is found in 'em is faithfully copied from those which the Prophets have left us; and in that which we find altered and corrupted, we may however discover the Vestiges of those Truths which these irreproachable Witnesses publish'd.

The second use that may be made of 'em, and which is no less considerable than the former, is that by this means we may be confirm'd in the knowledge of a great many Christian Truths which are prov'd in 'em with such a Strength and Evidence, as no reasonable Man can resist.

Religion only proposes them; for it belongs not to the Majesty of a God to prove the Necessity, Justice, and Truth of all he commands. He makes Men love what he requires, and that is more than to prove it to be reasonable. But a Philosopher, who has no Authority over us any farther than he persuades us by his Reasons, is obliged to give Proofs of every thing he advances; and thus *Plato* does, and his Proofs can't chuse but be very agreeable to them that believe, and very useful to Unbelievers, if they are but willing to attend a little to 'em for their Instruction.

Some Learned and Zealous Person, who is well read in *Ecclesiastical History*, will perhaps say; if *Plato* be so useful, whence come those thundering Censures, which some of the Fathers of the Church, and above all, *St. Chrysostom* have let fly against him? It would be a sufficient Answer to this, should I only oppose to it those great Praises, which other Fathers have given him, especially *St. Augustin*: But is it to be imagin'd, that that the same Principles that charm'd *St. Augustin*, were displeasing to *St. Chrysostom*? No certainly: The Spirit of God is not divided, and Truth always appears to those

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those whom God is pleased to illuminate. I'll therefore endeavour to shew from whence this difference of their Sentiments proceeded.

The Philosophy of *Plato* was look'd on two different ways, which have given occasion to two very opposite Opinions concerning it.

Christian Philosophers look'd upon it as a Doctrine, which by it's Principles naturally led to the Christian Religion.

And Pagan Philosophers considered it as a Doctrine, which contain'd Morals as perfect as those of Christianity, and which might even take place of this holy Religion.

In the first respect it was worthy of all the Encomiums that have been given it by the greatest Doctors of the Church, who came out of his School.

And on the second Account it deserved the greatest *Anathema*. The defects of this Philosophy could not be too much aggravated, nor could those haughty Philosophers that valued themselves so much upon it, be too much abased; for the Wisdom of the Wise, and the Knowledge of the Learned are no better than Folly, if they lead us not to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. *Plato* himself, by his Principles, would furnish us with Arms, to oppose those of his Admirers, that should be so senseless, as to take up with his Opinions, and shut their Eyes against the bright Truths of Religion.

But this Difference is now ceased: There are now none of those ignorant Persons. No Body is so blind to prefer, or even compare *Plato* and *Socrates*, I will not say to the Evangelists or Apostles, but to the meanest Christian. So that there is no danger in setting a value on those Truths which are found in *Plato*, and in rendering them all the Honour they deserve. They are not the less worthy of our respect, because they proceed from the mouth of a Heathen. Did not God take *Balaam* from among the Gentiles, to communicate his Spirit to him

him? When we render homage to the Truths foretold by that covetous and corrupt Prophet, we don't honour the Prophet, but Him by whom he was inspir'd. For as *St. Ambrose* says, * *'Tis not the desert of him who prophesies, but the Oracle of him who calls, and which the Grace of God reveals.* The greater the Darkeness was that benighted those Times, the more esteem we ought to have for *Plato* and *Socrates*, whom God seems to have chosen to be the first Heralds of those great Truths, and if I may venter to say it, the fore-runners of *St. Paul*, in the most superstitious, and idolatrous City in the World. 'Twas the Doctrine of these Philosophers that had produced and cherished those Sparks of knowledg, which this great Apostle found in the Hearts of some of the *Athenians*, concerning the Resurrection of the Dead, and the Immortality of the Soul.

What respect we have for this Doctrine will turn to the Glory of the Christian Religion: For if the Conformity of a part of *Plato's* Opinions, with what is revealed to us in the Gospel, has so raised this Philosopher's Name, that he is called *the divine Philosopher*: What Esteem and Veneration do they deserve, whose Minds and Hearts are fill'd with all the Truths of Christianity, and who are fed with the Celestial Doctrine, which our Lord Jesus Christ learned of God the Father, and came himself to teach us?

This Conformity of *Plato*, with the Doctrines of the Gospel, last Year engag'd a Learned and Pious Ecclesiastique, to give a small Extract of it, which was very well received by the Publick. This Extract, which was made in the Pallace, and under the Eye of one of the best and most learned Arch-Bishops God has given his Church, is a great Elogium on the Doctrine of this Philosopher. What greater Approbation can it have than that

* *Non contentis meritum, sed vocantis oraculum est revelante Dei Gratia. S. Ambr. Lib. 6. Epist. 37.*

of a Prelate, who so strongly adheres to the word of Truth, and is so diligent in instructing the People in it himself, as well as in causing others to instruct 'em.

Another great Advantage to be gained out of *Plato's* Writings, is that a Man may form his Judgment by 'em; and acquire that justness of Mind, and accuracy of reasoning, which are necessary in all conditions of Life, in order to discern Truth from Error, that he may take the right side in all Affairs that occur. For the Philosophy of *Socrates* is the source of good Sense, as * *Horace* himself acknowledges.

There is no Book in the World that teaches, so well as this, the Art of confuting Sophists, who by their poysonous Maxims, labour to corrupt the Minds of Men, and to destroy Truth and good Sense. As there will always be such Impostors to be found, this Art will always be of very great use, and there's no Man teaches it like *Plato*. There is nothing more compleat than his Logick, which infallibly gains its Point in every thing it undertakes; and 'tis impossible for a Man to defend himself from the force of it. It may be compar'd to the Sun, which when it rises, scarce makes us feel its Heat, but gradually encreases it, so that at length it becomes too hot to be endur'd.

I shall not speak of the Charms of his Dialogues, which are unexpressible: There are no Satyrs or Comedies that come near 'em. We can nowhere find such sharpness of Wit, so many Graces, and decent turns of Thought, nor so much variety either of Conceptions or Expressions: Nor were Ironies ever so finely manag'd; so that 'tis not so much an Entertainment of Reading as an Enchantment. In the Life of *Plato* I have sufficiently expos'd to view the advantages of Dialogue above all other ways of treating a Subject. I shall here only add that that which contributes most to render

* In *Arte Poetic.* V. 310

it so agreeable and useful, is that Truth comes gradually out of the Bowels of the Dispute; Just as when Pictures are unrolled we see the Persons represented rise up by degrees, till at last they appear in their full Proportion: and there is nothing more agreeable to the Mind than the springing up of Truth after this manner, the insensible progress of which even leaves the Soul time to be before hand with it, and to foresee its appearance. Now a Truth which our Minds have as it were divined, pleases us much more than that which has been formally prov'd to us, which most commonly only irritates and makes us uneasy.

These Dialogues have been the admiration of all Ages: In the Reign of *Trajan* they were still so much esteemed at *Rome*, that they occasion'd the introducing of a Custom which was received with great applause; they us'd to chuse the finest of these Dialogues, and make their Children learn them by Heart, that so they might at their Feasts recite 'em at Table, with those different Tones and Gestures that were suitable to the Manners and Characters of the different Persons whom *Plato* brings in speaking.

'Tis true this Custom lasted not long; but that which put an end to it was no less honourable than that which introduc'd it. For the Philosophers that condemn'd and abolished it, did so only because they accounted *Plato* too sublime to be so used, and because they could not endure that Dialogues so serious and solid should serve for a Divertisement at Table, and be heard amidst the Merriment, Noise and Tumult of a Feast. And this Sentiment of theirs was supported by the Authority of *Plato* himself; who in his Banquet, being to speak of the End of Man, of the Sovereign Good and other Theological Matters, does not push on his Demonstrations very far; he does not, according to his ordinary Custom, imitate a vigorous Wrestler, who never lets go his Hold, and who locks his Adversary so closely that he can't escape him; but he softens his Proofs and
C makes

makes 'em pleasant, and attracts his Auditors by the insinuation of Fables and Examples, which seem to be contriv'd not so much to convince as to divert 'em. For no Questions ought to be started at Table but such as may move the Soul after an agreeable and useful manner, and such as every one may easily understand, and those ought to be banish'd (to use the Words of *Democritus*) that are thorny, and out of which 'tis difficult to extricate one's self. The Discourse at Table ought to be for every one, like the Wine, and such as propose there abstracted and difficult Questions, exile thence this kind of Community, and renew the Feast of the Fox and the Crane.

If I had only consider'd the Eloquence, the Strength and Harmony of these Writings, I confess I should never have had the courage to translate 'em; in doing which, either through my own defect, or that of the Language in which I write, I have had the uneasiness of finding my self unable to preserve a multitude of Beauties and Elegancies that render these Dialogues Master-pieces, not to be equall'd. But I consider'd, that seeing they contain'd Matters of so great Importance and Necessity, it would be a great piece of Folly, to be so superstitious about Terms, as to deprive Mankind of so great an Advantage. And by good hap, that which is the most useful can't be hurt by my Translation. It preserves the Art of Logick, and all the Truth which *Socrates* proves by that means, and that's enough. Those Beauties which consist only in Expression are not so necessary, and we may easily forego 'em, provided we enjoy others; and not do like a certain Writer of the last Age, who after he had made very good Reflections on *Socrates*, and had acknowledged him to be *an admirable pattern in all great Qualities*, amuses and perplexes himself with Trouble, that a Soul so lovely had met with a Body so deform'd, and disagreeable to its Beauty. Which is as if a Souldier in reading the great Actions of *Cesar* or *Alexander*

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Alexander instead of making advantage of his reading, and learning the Art of War, should distress and afflict his Mind, because one was bald, and t'other inclin'd his Head on one side.

But it may be I have less reason to fear how it will go with my Translation, than how *Socrates* himself will escape. Our Age so much resembles that wherein this Philosopher liv'd, that in all appearance, if this wise Man now finds some intelligent Judges who will do him Justice, he'll find a greater number of Persons extremely prejudic'd, who will be sure to condemn him. In an Age wherein nothing is esteem'd but Riches; wherein that Slavery, which leads to Wealth, is prefer'd to Liberty, and Men chuse rather to nourish the Vices of others by their Flatteries, than to augment their own Vertues by their Labour. The Temperance, Frugality, Fortitude, Justice and Liberty of *Socrates* will be laugh'd at; and this will be but the accomplishment of what he predicted. * *If my Fellow-Citizens* (says he) *have not been able to endure my Maxims, much less will they be tolerable to Strangers.*

The greatest part will not give themselves so much trouble as to read him. † They will much sooner read the *Milesian Tables*, as *St. Jerome* says, that is such Pieces as corrupt the Heart and Mind, than Dialogues which inspire nothing but Wisdom. And among those that will read him, many will do it only out of Curiosity, for in our Time we may make the same Complaint that was made heretofore by *Taurus* the Philosopher, an ancient Commentator on *Plato*. One asks for *Plato's Dialogue of the Banquet*, to have the pleasure of seeing the Excesses of *Alcibiades*. Another for his *Phædrus*, because 'tis a Treatise of Criticism, and the Oration of *Lysias* is examin'd in it; and others desire

* *Apology* 69. † *Multocq; pars major est Milesias Fabulis revolvendum, quam Platonis Libros. St. Jerome in the Preface of his XII Book on Isaiah.*

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those Dialogues which have the greatest Reputation, and are accounted the best Pen'd, only for a frivolous Pleasure; and not one of all these thinks of embellishing his Mind by reading of these Books, so as to become more Modest, Temperate, Just, Patient, and Pious.

But those who will prove the least favourable to *Socrates*, are a sort of Men who highly value themselves upon their refin'd Wit; and a great many of those who are taken with the Pomp and Gay appearances of the World.

The former not having Eyes piercing enough to discover the secret Light of those hidden Beauties that adorn these Dialogues, will count *Socrates* a Dull and Languid Author, because he has no Witticisms, nor Gentile Turns. An obscure Person who never did any thing worthy to be read, shall call in question the Reputation of *Socrates*, a Person who has been an honour to Humane Nature by the Excellency of his Understanding; and shall prefer himself to him, trampling under his Feet * *the Testimonies which all the learned Men of Antiquity, and all Greece have rendred him, that for good Sense, Wit, Pleasantness, Subtilty, Strength, Variety and Abundance, he excelled all that ever had appeared in the World.* A Man must have a great Stock of good Opinion of himself, to appeal from so solemn a Judgment, and to make his appeal to himself too.

The latter are commonly corrupted by reading frivolous Books, which are wholly Compos'd for Ostentation, and as *Montagne* says, *can't perceive Riches unless they make a pompous Show*, and so have a disgust for every thing that is Plain and Simple; being persuaded that what is Natural and Easy, is a Kin to Dulness and Stupidity. These will think it below 'em to attend to a Philosopher who entertains 'em only with such Discourses as they count Vulgar and Trivial, who is scarce ever to be found out of Shops; who talks only of Husband-men, Smiths,

* *Cicero* in his 3d Book of Oratory.

Mafons,

Masons, Carpenrers, Shoemakers, and Taylors, and is eternally hammering on the same Subjects, and representing the same Images.

There are not wanting good Reasons to prove to 'em, that as a Man sometimes is thought plump and in good Case, when he is only *swell'd* and *bloated*; so that which is frequently taken for Accuracy of Judgment, is the Effect of some Distemper, and not at all the mark of a nice and fine Relish. The highest and most sublime Conceptions are often hid under a form that appears Vile and Contemptible. Are not the most Celestial Truths propos'd to us in the Gospel under Popular Images and Modes of Expression, like those us'd by *Socrates*? That which creeps on the Earth, is no less capable than that which is rais'd to the Heavens, of serving for a Representation to let the greatest Secrets, both of Nature and Grace into our Understanding. Nay, many times the most Simple and Common Ideas are the most proper to impress Truth on the Minds of Men, for besides that these are more proportionate to us, they do not Transport us out of our selves as the most Magnificent Ideas do. If none but great and dazling Images could strike us, God would not have fail'd to have constantly employ'd 'em, and since 'tis no more difficult for him to change Men than to illuminate 'em, he would have been so far from making his Spirit stoop to the Manners and Customs of those whom he inspired; that on the contrary he would have transform'd their Manners and Customs, to subject 'em in some sort to his Spirit, and yet he did not do thus. When he inspires *Daniel*, he leaves him to speak like a Man Educated in a Royal Court, he uses only Great and Magnificent Ideas; and when he inspires a Shepherd, such a one as *Amos*, he leaves him to explain himself by such Terms as were most familiar to him; but the Truth is every where equally sublime, and as it receives no accession to its Lustre by the Majesty of Figures, so neither does it lose any thing of its Glory by their Simplicity

city. *Socrates* was so well persuaded, that this Simplicity was alone capable to move and correct the Minds of Men, that when *Critias*, the most Cruel of the Thirty Tyrants, commanded him to let all the Artificers alone, and talk no more of 'em, he answer'd; * *I must then let all those Consequences alone too, which I draw from 'em, and must speak no more, either of Holiness or Justice, or any other Duties that become a Good Man.*

But perhaps our Censors will have less deference for the Authority of Reasons, than for that of Examples: 'Tis therefore necessary to give them an Account of what pass'd in the Time of *Socrates* himself; and to shew 'em the Characters, both of his Friends and Enemies.

On the one side were the most stupid and most corrupt among the People, some of whom, through ignorance, laugh'd at his Morality, and the manner of his Behaviour: Others through the Corruption of their Hearts, could not endure his Generous Liberty.

On the other side, Persons of the greatest Honour, and of chief Note in the Commonwealth; *Pericles*, *Nicias*, *Xenophon*, *Apollodorus*, *Criton*, *Critobulus*, *Eschinus*, *Antisthenes*, &c. These found infinite Charms in his Conversation. Who is it that is ignorant of *Alcibiades*? No Man had more Wit, or a truer gust of things; he was one of the best made, Bravest, most Gallant, most Magnificent, most Ambitious, and Nicest Men in the World; he was at the Head of the Athenians, he commanded their Armies, he had won several Battles, he had glitter'd in the Courts of Kings, and had not been rudely treated by Queens. According to the Maxims of the World, there's nothing more Bright and Illustrious than such a Man as this. Yet this same *Alcibiades* amidst all this Glory and Pomp, is so far from being offended at *Socrates* his way and manner of Deportment, which were so opposite to his own, that he no sooner became acquainted with him,

* *Xenoph.* in the 1st Book of the Memorable Things of *Socrates*.

† *but*

but he was struck with such a sense of his Merit, and the solid Gracefulness of his Conversation, that he knew not how to leave him; he was enchanted with his Discourses, which he prefer'd to the most excellent Musick; * he confesses, that a Man could neither hear him speak, nor even hear others repeat what he had said, without being transported. The Force and Truth of his Words drew Tears from him, and made him even leap for Joy. He compar'd him to certain Statues of *Satyrs* and *Silenes*, which were made to open and shut; to look on the out-side of 'em, nothing was more ugly; but when they were open'd, all the Deities were found in 'em together. He hardly lov'd or respected any one besides him, and he never met with him, but he took off from his own Head the Crown, which he, according to the Custom, wore on days of Ceremony, and put it on the Head of *Socrates*.

Therefore there is no *medium*, we must judge of *Socrates* either as the worst and meanest of the Athenians did, or like *Pericles* and *Alcibiades*; we may take our Choice.

All these Contradictions which I have foreseen, and which indeed may make these Dialogues become to the greatest part of Readers † *like those exquisite Dainties that were formerly set on Tombs*, have not discourag'd me, but only convinc'd me that a bare Translation, though never so exact and faithful, would not make a sufficient impression on the Minds of some Men, if it were not supported by something, that might prevent all these Inconveniencies, or at least a good part of 'em; and I could think but of two ways to succeed in this.

The first was, to place an Argument at the Head of every Dialogue, to explain the Subject of it, to unfold the Art and Method of it, and to take particular notice of every thing in it of the greatest im-

* In the Dialogue of the Banquet.

† Quasi appositiones Epularum circumpositæ Sepulchro, *Ecclesiastic.* 30. 18.

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portance. The Arguments of *Marfilius Ficinus* do not go to the Matter of Fact; besides, they are too abstracted, and are abundantly more difficult to be understood than the Dialogues themselves. And those of *De Serres* are too wide and indefinite, they never well fix the State of the Question, or the Quality of the Proofs; nor do they ever explain either *Plato's* Design, or his Address. Now an Argument ought to be a faithful Guide always to attend the Reader, to conduct him where-ever he goes, and always to set him into the right Path.

The second way was to make Remarks to elucidate the principal Difficulties, to render the hidden Beauties discernable, to explain the Train of Reasoning, and the Solidity of the Principles and Proofs, and to help to discover what is false, from that which is true.

Marfilius Ficinus did not so much as think of this; *De Serres* on this Account is more useful than he; for by his Marginal Notes he at least hinders you from losing the Thread of *Plato's* Reasoning, and makes you comprehend the Train and Progress of his Proofs: But yet he abandons you in the greatest difficulties.

In the Time of *Maximus Tyrius*; that is in the second Age, it was very earnestly desired, that some one would undertake to elucidate those obscure and knotty Passages of *Plato*; above all in what respects his Opinions in Theology, and many Philosophers labour'd in this Work, as may be seen in his Life; but with so little success, that instead of resolving the Difficulties, they have increased 'em. They have scarce assisted me once or twice in the Ten Dialogues which I have Translated; and they would have very often led me into Mistakes if I would have followed 'em.

The cause of their Errors was, that they did not draw from the true Fountain, and had a mind to explain *Plato* by *Aristotle's* Principles, which are very different from those of *Plato*. The latter is most commonly

commonly conformable to sound Theology, or may be very easily reduc'd to it by his own Principles well explain'd : But 'tis otherwise with his Disciple, and where *Plato* may be once corrected by *Aristotle*, *Aristotle* may be corrected a hundred times by *Plato*.

I don't presume so much on my own Ability, as to think I have filled up all the Devoirs of a good Interpreter; without doubt some Difficulties will yet be found in that which I have Translated, but perhaps all of 'em ought not to be imputed to me. Obscurities ordinarily arise from three Causes, from the Sublimity of the Subject, from the Ignorance of the Interpreter, and from the Incapacity or Unattention of the Reader. It will be reasonable for the Reader to accuse me of some of 'em; but let him also sometimes accuse, either the Subject or himself: If this Conduct be observed, I may venture to hope for the Diminution of these Difficulties.

At the end of the first Volume the Reader will find an Abridgment of Three Dialogues, which are also entirely Translated in the same Volume. That which has given occasion to this Repetition, is as follows; I had a very great desire to publish *Plato* in French, but I made this Reflection; that Philosophy, as *Plato* himself somewhere says, requires Free Men who are Masters of their Time; and who, provided they find the Truth, don't enquire whether the Discourses that lead to it, are long or short: But nothing in our Time is more rarely found, than these Free Men. Some are so oppress'd with Care and Business, that they are scarce ever at their own disposal; and others are so continually agitated and shuffled by a Thousand Passions, that they are always in Action, without doing any thing, and resemble so many fugitive Slaves.

Therefore to Accomodate *Plato* to the Occupations of the former, and the restless Humour of the latter, I thought such Abridgments might be made, as would be of very great Use; and I made some, in which I preserved, the best I could, the Spirit of
Socrates

Socrates and his Method, so that none of his Principal Strokes might be lost. From hence I suppos'd two considerable Advantages might be drawn. First, That by this means *Plato* might be read in a Weeks time, and then, that the Truths he teaches, would be more deeply fix'd in the Mind; because the Proofs being more contracted, would make a more lively Impression. I was farther confirm'd in this Thought by observing the effect these Abridgments produced on all that heard 'em read; every one was mov'd by 'em, and could not chuse but feel the force of 'em.

But it must be confess'd to the Glory of *Plato*, and perhaps somewhat to my Shame too, that when I was on the point of committing 'em to the Press, and was willing to review 'em by the Original, I was my self disgusted with my Work, and found in the Original so many Elegancies which I had not been able to preserve; that I was afraid I should make it sustain too great a loss in not publishing it entire, for nothing can be taken from it, that is not worthy to be admired. And to think there are any Vacuities and useles parts in his Writings, is but to deceive ones-self. There is a great deal of difference between a Man's quitting his Subject, and sounding it to the bottom. *Plato* always goes back to first Principles, and examines every Subject on all its different sides; he maintains that this is the only way to make sure Demonstrations; and he is every where such an Enemy to long Discourses, that is, such as are useles, that he looks upon 'em as the Rock on which Truth is split, and as the Character, not of a Philosopher, but of a Sophist. This obliged me to alter my Resolution: However, in Obedience to some Persons of very great Merit, who desired these Abridgments of me, I have published three, that the Publick may draw some profit from 'em, or at least may make a Judgment of 'em.

I might here have a fair occasion to answer the Invectives that have been made against *Plato* in our Time: But since they come only from such Persons as never read so much as one of his Dialogues; perhaps they'll change their Sentiments when once they have read him. Besides, 'tis wasting of ones Time to defend *Plato*; for he sufficiently defends himself; and that may be said of him with yet more Justice, which the greatest of the Latin Historians said of *Cato*, equally ridiculing the Praises *Cicero* had given him, and the Satyr *Cesar* had made on him. * *None could ever augment the Glory of this Great Man by his Praises, nor diminish it by his Satyr.*

* *Cujus Gloriæ neque profuit quisquam laudando, nec vituperando quisquam nocuit. Titus Livius.*

T H E
L I F E of *P L A T O*,
 W I T H
 An Account of the Principal of
 his Opinions in Philosophy.

*The Rise of
 all the diffe-
 rent Sects
 of Philoso-
 phers.*

G O D was pleas'd to endow the first Man with true Wisdom; but the Passions soon communicated to him their Mortal Poyson, and precipitated him into a state of Rebellion against his Maker, and so made him lose all the advantages of his Origin. 'Tis from this Fountain his Posterity have deriv'd all their Errors. Being unhappily taught what Good they had lost, by the Evils they suffer'd, they made their best Efforts to repair their loss. But since Man in a state of Perfection had not strength enough to keep that Happiness he enjoy'd; how should he be able when in a state of Corruption, to put himself in possession of that true Good, of which Sin had deprived him? No, 'tis not to be expected from him, that he should conduct us back to our former Felicity. This is the work of God and not of Man. All the wise Pagans may in this respect be compar'd to drunken Men, who while they have a mind to return Home, knock at every Door, and take every House for their own. Some remains of Reason still gave 'em a discovery of what they ought to seek; and an inexhaustible Source of Blindness and Corruption, still hinder'd 'em from finding it, or if they found it from embracing it. *Socrates* was the first of 'em, who was eminently distinguish'd from others by a clearer and purer Light (which perhaps

was

was the Reward of his Modesty and Humility) and acquir'd a more sublime and certain knowledg of the Duties of Man, of the Nature of God, of the Law of Nature, and of Justice. Therefore *Plato* says of him, that he added Fire to Fire, thereby signifying, that by amassing together those degrees of Light, which he found scatter'd up and down; and giving 'em a new Lustre by his luminous and fruitful Mind, he spread Light far and near, and rais'd a great Flame out of that, which before his time, was but a number of little Sparks almost buried under the Ashes: But this sublime knowledg of his, was not without a mixture of many Errors; so that to gain advantage by his Doctrine, which has been preserv'd and improv'd by *Plato*, care must be taken to separate the Truths which it pleas'd God to discover to him, from the Falshoods and Illusions, in which he himself involv'd 'em. This we may most certainly do, since we have the true measure of Truth in our Hands, which is the Word of God. All he says, that is conformable to this, is undoubtedly true; and may moreover serve to prove the Truths of the Christian Religion; and whatever is opposite to it, is the fruit of Falshood and Error. And the Doctrine of *Plato* itself has this advantage, that such an Examen as we plead for is one of his principal Rules, and his first Principle; for he maintains, that nothing ought ever to be received in any Science, but what agrees with * Eternal Truth, and with the Oracles of God.

Plato founded the Old Academy on the Opinions of *Pythagoras*, those of *Heraclitus*, and those of *Socrates*, and by adding to the discoveries of these great Men that Light which he had acquir'd in his Travels, and had deriv'd from the same Springs, he establish'd a Sect of Philosophers much more perfect than those that had appear'd in the World before him. However, I shall not look back so far as those

* By this Eternal Truth *Plato* means an ancient Tradition, which he pretends the first Men received from God, and transmitted to their Posterity.

Philosophers I have mention'd, whose Opinions may be seen in *Diogenes Laertius*. I'll say but a Word of them by the way, and confining my self only to what relates to *Plato*. I shall first give an Account of his Life; after this I shall explain his Doctrine, and examin it with respect to Morality, Religion, Policy, Physicks and Logick. I shall as much as in me lies, discover the Source, both of the Truths and Errors he teaches: I shall speak of his way of treating the Subjects on which he insists: From thence I shall proceed to make a Judgment of his Stile; I shall speak of his Principal Interpreters, and in fine shall give a Translation of some of his Dialogues; the Method and Subjects of which I shall explain; and here I shall remark whatever I think may be still of use to us. 'Tis with such a disposition of Mind as this, that we should read the Works of the Heathens; for those who are too much enamour'd of 'em, and take up with them, never find enough Truth in 'em to give 'em Satisfaction and Righteousness enough to fortifie 'em against Vice, but continue to want the true Food of Souls, and remain indigent of solid Vertue. This Method I speak of, is taught us by a * Learned Father of the Church, and was followed by himself, as he informs us in the † Letter he wrote to Pope *Damasus*; in which, after he had applied to this purpose, the ‡ Law God gave his People, concerning a strange Woman, when taken Captive in War, who was not to be married to an Israelite, till he had caus'd her to change her Clothes, to be purified, and to have her Nails and her Hair cut; he adds. || "We do the same when we read the Heathen Philosophers (who to us are that strange Wo-

* *St. Jeromè.* † Letter 146. ‡ *Deut. Chap. 21.*

|| Itaque & nos facere solemus quando Philosophos legimus, quando in manus nostras libri veniunt sapientiae saecularis; si quid in eis utile reperimus, ad nostrum dogma convertimus, si quid verò superfluum, de Idolis, de amore, de cura saecularium rerum, hæc radimus, his Calvicium inducimus, hæc in unguium morem fero acutissimo rescamus.

"man)

“man) and when the Books of the Wisdom of this
 “World fall into our hands. If we find any thing
 “in ’em that is profitable, we make use of it by re-
 “ferring it to our own Principles; and when we
 “find any thing useless and superfluous, as when they
 “treat of Idols, of Love, and of the Care of Earth-
 “ly and Perishable things, this we pare away. These
 “are the Clothes which we take from this strange
 “Woman; these are the Nails and Hair we cut off
 “with a sharp Instrument.

By this means we restore to the good Philosophy
 and sound Theology of the Ancient *Hebrews*, what
 the *Greeks* have stolen from ’em, for they are en-
 rich’d only with their Spoils.

Plato descended from a Brother of *Solon*, and
 consequently was of the Family of *Codrus* King of
Athens, and thus his Genealogy may be Trac’d to
Neptune by *Neleus* King of *Pylos*, from whom
Codrus descended in the Fifth Generation: So that in
 respect of his Birth, his Nobility was as great as
 any the Pride of any Man can flatter themselves
 withal. *Ariston* having espous’d his Cousin Ger-
 man *Perictione*, * ’tis pretended that *Apollo* appear’d
 to him in a Dream, and forbid him to approach
 his Wife, because she was with Child by Him. *Ari-*
ston obey’d; and now look’d upon *Perictione* no
 more as his Wife, but as a Goddess, till she was
 deliver’d of *Plato*, on the Day of *Apollo*’s † Nativity,
 as the *Delians* affirm. *Plutarch* makes a Reflection
 upon this, which deserves not to be forgot. He says,
 Those that have made *Apollo* *Plato*’s Father, have
 done that God no dishonour in attributing to him the
 Production of a Man, who is the Physician of Souls;
 and labours to cure ’em of the most violent Passions,
 and most dangerous Distempers. And *St. Jerome*

* These Suppositions were usual in those Times, for instance,
 there was soon after this, a Woman of the Kingdom of *Pontus*,
 who persuaded a multitude of People that she was with Child by
Apollo, and was brought to Bed of a Son, who was nam’d *Silenus*,
 whom *Lysander* was willing to make use of to carry on the Design
 he had laid to make himself King of *Sparta*. † The 7th of Feb.
 some-

somewhere observes, That those Philosophers who first gave out this Fable, did not believe that he whom they look'd upon as the Prince of Wisdom, could be born of any other than a Virgin.

Plato was born the first Year of the Eighty eighth Olympiade, that is 426 Years before the Nativity of *Jesus Christ*. He was at first call'd *Aristocles*, after the Name of his Grand-Father: His Wrestling-Master call'd him *Plato*, from his broad square Shoulders; and he continued ever after to bear this Name. In his Infancy as he was one Day sleeping under a Myrtle Tree, 'tis said a Swarm of Bees settled upon his Lips, which was taken as an Omen to signifie that his Style would be extreemly sweet. He began his Studies under a Grammarian call'd *Dionysius*, made his Exercises under *Ariston* of *Argos*; learn'd Musick of *Draco* the Athenian; and under *Metellus* of *Agrigentum*; he apply'd himself to Painting and Poesy; he even made some Tragedies which he burnt when he was 20 Years of Age, after he had heard *Socrates*. To this Philosopher he entirely adher'd; and having a marvellous Inclination to Vertue; made so good a Proficiency by the Discourses of this Righteous Man, that at 25 Years of Age he gave such proofs of his extraordinary Wisdom, as made it appear that he was already capable of Governing a State.

The Lacedemonians had then made themselves Masters of *Athens*, and *Lysander* established there the Government of 30, who at first Rul'd with some kind of Mildness, but soon after made use of a Tyrannical Power. At this Juncture *Plato* gave a very considerable Instance of the freedom of his Soul, and shew'd he could not truckle to make his Court to a Tyrant. *Lysander*, who made all stoop to him, and had render'd himself formidable by his Cruelties, kept some Poets about him, who made it their business to celebrate his Glory, and flatter his Vanity. *Antimachus* and *Niceratus* were of this Number; they made Verses in Praise of *Lysander*, by way of Emula-

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lation; he being made Judge of their Performance, gave the Prize to *Niceratus*. *Antimachus* overborn with this Disgrace, suppressed his Poem. *Plato* who lov'd him for his fine Poetry, endeavour'd to encourage him, and without fearing *Lyfander's* Resentment, told him, that he was not so much to be blam'd as his Judge; for (said he) Ignorance is as bad a Distemper in the Eyes of the Mind, as blindness in those of the Body.

Plato's Merit which now began to be much taken notice of, induc'd the Ministers of Tyranny to make the greatest efforts they could to draw him to their Party, and to engage him to concern himself in the Government. Nothing was propos'd to him but what was suitable to his Age, and agreeable to his Maxims. Indeed all his Ambition lay in a desire of making the Knowledge he had acquir'd, serviceable to his Countrey; and he was so far persuaded by the Promises of those Thirty Tyrants, that he did not despair of inducing 'em at length to abandon their Arbitrary Methods; and Govern the City with all the Wisdom and Moderation of good Magistrates. While he employ'd his Thoughts to this purpose Night and Day, and was in search of the most proper means to make this Design successful, he carefully observ'd all their Steps: But soon perceiv'd that the Mischief grew worse and worse; and that the Spirit of Tyranny was too deeply rooted, to leave him any hope of being able to destroy it. * These Thirty Tyrants filled the whole City with Murders and Proscriptions; and while he had a share in the Publick Affairs, it came to this Point, that he must either be a Confederate in their Crimes, or a Victim to their Fury. The pressure of this Misfortune, which none but God himself could redress; gave a check to his Ambition, and made him willing to wait for more favourable Times.

Fortune soon appear'd willing to second his good Intentions; for the Thirty Tyrants were expell'd,

* See Xenophon's History of Greece. Lib. 2.

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and the Form of the Government quite changed. This gave a little Revival to *Plato's* Hopes, when almost extinguish'd. But it was not long before he perceiv'd that this new form of Government was no better than the former; and that the State every day receiv'd new Wounds. Nay *Socrates* himself was sacrific'd upon this Revolution. The Laws were trampled under foot, Order and Discipline were no more regarded, and all Authority was in the Hands of the People, who were always more formidable than any Tyrants could be. It was impossible to rectify this Disorder, for a Man that should undertake it had need of good Friends; and in so great a Confusion, the Fidelity of old Friends becomes as suspected as that of new ones is dangerous.

Plato knew not what to determine under these Circumstances. He had no expectation of help from the neighbouring Cities, where Confusion reigned no less than it did at *Athens*. In an Age wherein Philosophy was advanc'd to its highest perfection, Injustice was carried to the last extremity, which is the ordinary effect of that Contempt of Truth which Men sometimes manifest, when it shines upon 'em with the greatest evidence. This Inundation of Injustice and Violence augmented the love which *Plato* bore to Philosophy; He cast himself into its Arms as into a safe Port, fully convinc'd that the Welfare of Cities and of particular Persons depend on it; and that it is impossible to be happy without it. At this time he heard the Discourses of *Cratylus* who taught the Philosophy of *Heraclitus*, and *Hermogenes* who taught that of *Parmenides*. He afterward went to *Megara* to see *Euclid* who founded the *Megarick* Sect. From *Megara* he pass'd to *Cyrene* to perfect himself in the Mathematicks under *Theodorus*, who was the greatest Mathematician of his Time. He then visited *Egypt*, and convers'd a long time with the Egyptian Priests, who taught him a great part of their Traditions, and made him acquainted with the Books of *Moses*, and those of the Prophets.

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While he was at *Memphis* there arriv'd a Lacedemonian who was sent by *Agésilas* to desire the Priest *Connuphis* to explain a certain Inscription which was found on a Copper Plate in the Tomb of *Alcmene*. This Priest after he had spent three days in looking over all sorts of Figures and Characters, answer'd, that the Letters of this Plate were such as were used in *Egypt*, in the time of *Proteus*, that *Hercules* had carried them into *Greece*, and that they contain'd an Admonition which God gave the Greeks to live in Peace; by instituting Sports in honour of the Muses, by the study of Philosophy, and other parts of Learning, and by disputing one against another with Reasons, and Words of Justice, with a design only to know the Truth and to follow the Dictates of it. 'Tis probable this Priest was not able to read the Inscription, but wisely made use of so favourable an occasion to appease the Grecian Wars, which was infinitely better than if he had read it.

This Stratagem of *Connuphis* was soon serviceable to *Plato* for a like design; for when he was upon his return with *Simmias*, and on the Coast of *Caria*, he met some Men that came from *Delos*, who entreated him to explain a very terrible Prediction which they had received from the Oracle of *Apollo*. The Purport of it was, that the Miseries under which the Greeks labour'd should not cease, till they had doubled the Cubical Altar which was in his Temple. They told him they had attempted to put this Order in execution, but that when they had doubled each side of the Altar, instead of making it double as they hop'd to have done, and as the God requir'd, they made it eight fold; which made 'em fear the continuation of their Calamities. *Plato* calling to mind what the Egyptian Priest had done, told 'em, that God did but mock the Greeks for their Contempt of Sciences; and by reproaching 'em of their Ignorance and Stupidity, exhorted 'em seriously to apply themselves to the study of Geometry, which alone would make 'em able to find

two proportional Lines to double a Cubical Body by equally augmenting all its Dimensions. And added, that if they had a mind to correct their Work, it was but to address themselves to *Eudoxus* or *Helicon*; but that God had no design at all to have his Altar doubled, and that the only thing he requir'd by the Oracle was, that they should lay down their Arms to converse with the Muses, and moderate their Passions by the Study of Letters, and Sciences; in rendering mutual Love and Service, instead of hating and destroying one another. He went after this into *Italy*, where he heard *Philolaus* and *Eurytus*, who were Pythagorean Philosophers. From thence he pass'd into *Sicily* to see the Wonders of that Island: By this time he had arrived to forty Years of Age.

This Voyage, which was purely the effect of his Curiosity, laid the first foundations of the Liberty of *Syracuse*, and made way for those great things that were put in Execution by *Dion*, * the Brother-in-Law and Favourite of *Dionysius* the Elder.

There was at that time a Young Man who was naturally Courageous and Magnanimous; but having had a Servile Education under a Tyrant, and being accusom'd to the Submissions and Slavery of a Cringing and Timorous Courtier, and which is yet more pernicious, brought up in Luxury, Opulence, and Laziness, would have suffer'd those precious Seeds of Vertue to die in his Soul, had not *Plato* reviv'd them by his Discourses. He had no sooner heard the Precepts of this Philosopher, but his Mind was so inflam'd with the love of Vertue, that he desir'd nothing so much as to embrace and follow it. And perceiving with what facility *Plato* had chang'd his Mind, he believ'd he might produce the same effect upon that of *Dionysius* too, and could not rest till he had engag'd this Prince to have a Conference with him. *Dionysius*, who then

See Plutarch in the Life of Dion.

* For he was the Son of *Hipparinus*, whose Daughter *Dionysius* had married.

enjoy'd a great deal of Leisure, consented to this Interview. Their Discourse was wholly on Vertue, and they presently fell into a Dispute about the Nature of true Fortitude: *Plato* prov'd that this could by no means be attributed to Tyrants, who are so far from being Valiant and Brave, that they are more Weak and Timorous than Slaves. They afterwards came to speak of Utility, and of Justice. *Plato* shew'd that nothing could be properly said to be useful, but that which is Honest and Just; and made it appear, that the Life of Just Men was happy amidst the greatest Adversity; and that of the Unjust miserable in the very bosom of Prosperity. *Dionysius* who found himself convinc'd by his own Experience, could no longer hold the Discourse, but with a pretence of making a Jest of his Morals, told him *his Discourses savour'd of Old Age*; to which *Plato* replied, *that his savour'd of Tyranny*. This Prince not accusom'd to hear such odious Truths, ask'd him very importunately *for what he came into Sicily*? *Plato* answer'd that, *He came thither to seek a good Man*. And by thy Speech, replied *Dionysius*, *it seems thou hast not yet found one*.

In another Conference which was no less smart than the former, the Tyrant to intimate to *Plato*, that he ought to conduct himself with more Caution before him, and not to use so provoking a Liberty of Speech, mention'd these two Verses to him,

——* *In every Tyrant's Court*

He a meer Slave becomes, who enters free.

Plato return'd him these two Lines, changing the latter thus,

—— *In every Tyrant's Court*

Who enters free, shall ne're become a Slave.

to signify that a True Philosopher can never lose

* These are two Lines of *Sophocles*.

his Liberty. *Dion* fearing the Prince's Displeasure hereupon would have some fatal effect, ask'd a Dismission for *Plato*, that he might take the advantage of a Vessel that was to carry back *Poluides* the Lacedemonian Ambassador. *Dionysius* gave him leave to go; but pressed the Ambassador with great importunity, either to take *Plato's* Life away by the way, or at least to sell him; assuring him, this would do him no injury. For if he is a Just Man (says he) he'll be as happy in Slavery as in the enjoyment of Liberty. 'Tis said *Poluides* carried him to the Isle of *Ægina*, where a Law had been published, by which all Athenians that should come ashore there, were order'd to be put to death. *Plato* therefore was taken, and brought before the Judges. He expected his Sentence without shewing any token of fear; which made one of 'em think fit to say, that he was a Philosopher, and not an Athenian. This word spoken after a jesting manner, sav'd his Life. He was only condemn'd to be sold, and was immediately bought for Thirty * Mina's by a Cyrenian named *Anniceris*, who set him at Liberty, sent him back to *Athens*, and would by no means be reimburs'd; telling them, That as the Athenians were not the only Persons who knew *Plato's* Merit, so they were not the only Persons who were worthy to render him Service. However, *Plato* says nothing of all these particulars in his Seventh Letter, where he speaks of this Voyage into *Sicily*; and t's probable he would not have forgotten to speak at least of his Benefactor.

After the Death of *Dionysius* the Elder, his Son *Dionysius* the Younger succeeded; who had been very ill Educated; for his Father, who was jealous even of his own Children. had always strictly kept him from Company; lest if he should come to know himself, and to converse with Men of Sense, who were weary of Slavery, he should Conspire against him. This Young Prince was no sooner up-

* About Sixty Pound Sterling, or something more.

on the Throne, but he was so dazzled with his Grandeur, that he knew not where he was, and so became an easie prey to his Courtiers, who forgot nothing that might corrupt him, and became the ingenious and industrious Ministers of his Pleasures. Nothing was to be seen in the Pallace but horrible Corruption of Manners and Excesses. They had Debauches that held for Three Months together, during which time, all Wise and Sober Men, whose presence alone would have condemn'd or disturb'd these shameful Divertisements, were forbidden to enter. *Dion*, whose concern for the State made him fear the Pleasures of the Young *Dionysius* more than ever he had fear'd the Cruelty of his Father, lost no opportunity of letting him know what Precipices were before him, and how certain his Fall would be; and believing his Vices sprang only from Ignorance and Idleness, he endavoured to put him upon some Honourable Exercises, and to make him in Love with the Sciences, especially that which aims at the Reformation of Manners. He told him, nothing but Vertue could give him a solid Happiness, which would extend its Influence to all his People. That his Father had in vain flatter'd himself, that he had left him an Empire bound with Adamantine Chains, since these Chains would soon be soften'd by his Debauches. That Fear and Force were not the true Supports of a Throne, but the Affection and Love of Subjects, which, he said, was always the consequence of the Vertue and Justice of Princes. He represented to him, that True Grandeur consists not in having great Equipages, superb Pallaces, sumptuous Furniture, and fine Clothes; but in having the Pallace of the Mind royally adorn'd: And that none but *Plato* was capable of communicating to him all the Vertues that ought to embellish a Prince's Soul. By entertaining him with such Discourses as these, in which he always thus intermix'd the great Truths he had learn'd from this Philosopher; he inspir'd him with such

The Life of Plato.

an ardent, or rather furious desire to draw him to his Court, and to put himself under his Direction, that he sent Couriers to *Athens* with very pressing Letters of his own, accompanied with other Letters of *Dion's*, and of all the Pythagorean Philosophers that were in *Great Greece*; who entreated him very earnestly to take the advantage of the favourable Opportunity the Divine Providence offer'd him, to make a Philosopher of a King; and conjur'd him to come with expedition, before the Debauches of the Court had made this Prince alter his Resolution, who at present was passionately in Love with Philosophy.

These great Promises did not immediately move *Plato*, who knew Young People too well, to promise himself any thing certain from the Flashes of a Young Prince, whose Inclinations commonly are various and opposite, and frequently pass suddenly off; and in whom the Love of Vertue does not always take root deeply enough to resist the Efforts of those Vices which attaque him on all sides. So that *Plato* did not know how to resolve on this Voyage; but at length, after he had consider'd, that in curing only one Man, he should make a whole Nation happy, and that perhaps God was opening a way for him here, actually to set on foot that Perfect Government of which he had already given the Idea in the first Books of his *Commonwealth*; he resolv'd to go, not out of Vanity, or to acquire Riches, as his Enemies have accused him; but was overcome only by the respect he bore to himself, that he might not give the World an occasion to reproach him, that he only discours'd of Vertue, but never voluntarily put himself in a Condition to reduce it to practise.

To these Reasons there was added another Motive much more pressing; and that was, that it would be a shame for him to abandon *Dion* in the dangerous Circumstances he was in, attack'd on all sides by the Calumnies of his Enemies; who because they could
not

not bear the Severity of his Manners, and the Wisdom of his Conduct, endeavour'd to render him suspected to *Dionysius*, and who would infallibly destroy him, if this Prince had time given him to relapse into his former Disorders. This cast the Balance in detetmining *Plato* to quit his Employments at 64 years of Age, to go, it may be with too much Confidence, as himself confesses, to deal with the Caprices of a young Tyrant.

He was received in *Sicily* with all possible marks of Honour. *Dionysius* was not content only to send him a Galley adorn'd with Ribbands, as if he had been a God, but also went himself to receive him at the Port in a magnificent Charriot, into which he took him; and render'd thanks to the Gods by a public Sacrifice for his Arrival, as the greatest Felicity that could happen ro his Government.

This so happy beginning had yet happier Consequences; for, as if some God had appear'd and taken pleasure in changing of Hearts; the whole Court became so reform'd, at least in appearance, that the Pallace of *Dionysius* was more like a School of Philosophers, or a sacred Temple, than the place of a Tyrant's Residence.

Some days after *Plato's* Arrival the time of an Anniversary Sacrifice came about, which was wont to be offer'd in the Castle for the Prince's Prosperity.

The Herald having according to the Custom, pronounced with a loud Voice the solemn Prayer in this Form, *May it please the Gods long to maintain the Tyranny, and to preserve the Tyrant.* *Dionysius* who began to hate those Names, cry'd aloud to him. *What wilt thou never leave cursing me?* By which words 'twas judg'd the Discourses of *Plato* had made a real and strong Impression on his Mind: This made all those that favour'd this Tyrannical Form of Government, believe 'twas best to lose no time, and that it was necessary to ruine *Dion* and *Plato* before they had acquir'd Authority and Power enough over the Tyrant, to render all their Efforts useless. They soon

soon found an occasion very favourable to their design, nor did they fail to make their advantage of it. *Plato* had already perswaded *Dionysius* to dismiss ten thousand Forreigners which compos'd his Guard, to disband ten thousand Horse, with the greatest part of his Infantry, and to reduce the 400 Gallies, which he always kept equip'd, to a very small number. Those ill designing Men misrepresented this Advice, and would have perswaded *Dionysius* that *Dion* had engag'd this Sophist to induce him to distrust his Guards, and the rest of his Troops, that so the Athenians finding him without defence might come and ravage *Sicily*, and revenge themselves for the Losses they had sustained under *Nicias*; or else with a design to expel him, and to take his place himself in the Throne. This Calumny, which was plausible enough to surprize a Tyrant, did not however produce half the effect they expected from it. Only *Dion* became a Victim to the Anger of *Dionysius*, who caus'd him to be put on board a Vessel in his Presence; and shamefully banished him.

At the same time it was reported at *Syracuse*, that he had also put *Plato* to death; but this Story had no foundation; for *Dionysius* on the contrary redoubled his Caresses towards him, either because he believed, that he had been first deluded by the Artifices of *Dion*, or else because indeed he himself could not tell how to live without seeing and hearing him.

The Love he had for *Plato* augmented every day, and advanc'd to that excess, that he became as jealous of him, as of a Mistress, and us'd his utmost Efforts, to oblige him to prefer his Friendship to that of *Dion*: But, as *Plato* said, he took a wrong Course to obtain this Preference; for he endeavour'd to acquire it only by demonstrations of an ambitious and tyrannical Love, instead of meriting it, if that had been possible, by a conformity of Manners, in making an Improvement of his Maxims, and uniting himself to him by the bonds of Vertue. His Timorousness

mourousness rather than his Ill humour hinder'd him from taking this method: for tho he passionately lov'd *Plato*, he scarce dar'd to see him but by stealth, for fear of irritating such as were displeas'd with this Intimacy between 'em; so that he always fluctuated between desire, and fear, and thereby render'd all *Plato's* Exhortations useles to him, and remain'd a Slave to his Vices. However because he fear'd he would leave *Sicily* without his permission, he order'd him to lodge in the Castle, on pretence to do him honour, but in reality to secure his Person. There he endeavour'd to gain his Heart by the most magnificent Offers he could think of. He shew'd him his Treasures, and told him all that he desir'd of him was to become Master of his Forces, and of all his Power, provided he would love him more than *Dion*. Few Philosophers would have resisted such powerful Temptations. But *Plato*, who could make Vertue give place to Vice in his Soul, constantly told him, that he would love him as much as *Dion*, when once he was as truly vertuous as He. This threw the Tyrant into an horrible Rage; he threaten'd him with Death, and the next moment beg'd pardon for all his Violence. *Plato* would have found his Prison more tolerable, if he had been the Object of his Hatred; for he was every day oblig'd to use new Management to make the Obligations of Hospitality agree with the Interests of Philosophy. In fine, he had the good Fortnne to be deliver'd from this Captivity. For a War broke out, which forc'd *Dionysius* to send him back into *Greece*. At his departure he would have loaded him with Presents, which *Plato* refus'd, contenting himself with the Promise he made him of recalling *Dion*, when the War should be once ended. When he was ready to embark *Dionysius* said to him. *Plato, when thou art in the Academy with thy Philosophers thou wilt speak ill of me. God forbid* (reply'd *Plato*) *that we should have so much time to lose in the Academy as to talk of Dionysius.* The disinterestedness of *Plato* appear'd on many

many occasions, as his Rivals themselves could not chuse but grant. *Dionysius* having a mind to make Presents to the Philosophers of his Court, and putting it to their choice what to have, *Aristippus* desir'd Money, and *Plato* ask'd only for Books; upon which *Aristippus* being rallied for his Avarice, made answer, *Plato loves Books, and I love Money.*

As he return'd into Greece he pass'd by *Olympia* to see the Games; and there gave marks of a Modesty not much differing from deep Humility, and such as deserve to be remark'd. He happen'd to lodge with some Strangers of considerable Note; He eat with 'em, pass'd whole Days in their Company, liv'd after a most simple and ordinary manner, without ever speaking a word to 'em either of *Socrates* or the Academy; and without letting them know any thing more of himself than that his Name was *Plato*. These Strangers were extremely pleas'd that they had found a Man of so sweet and sociable a Temper; but because he spoke only of very common Matters, they never thought he was that Philosopher, whose Name was so well known.

The Games being ended, they went with him to *Athens*, where he furnished 'em with Lodgings; they were no sooner come thither, but they entreated him to carry 'em to see that great Man, who bore the same Name with him, and was the Disciple of *Socrates*. *Plato* told 'em smiling, that himself was the Man. These Strangers were surpriz'd, that they had so long possess'd so great a Person among 'em without knowing him; and could not sufficiently admire that he had liv'd with 'em after so plain and simple a manner, and that he had shown that by the sweetness of his Manners alone, without the help of his Wit and Eloquence, he could gain the friendship of all Persons with whom he convers'd.

Some time after this, he gave the People * Plays, for which *Dion* furnished the Habits, and was at

* They were Tragedies,

all the Charge: *Plato* being willing to let him have this Honour, that his Magnificence might acquire him a yet greater Interest in the Good-Will of the Athenians. It is not known whether *Dion* made a long stay at *Athens*; this only is certain, that *Plato* forgot nothing that might induce him to moderate his Resentment, and not to attempt any thing against *Dionysius*. He represented to him, that the Injustice that had been done him, and the ill Conduct of that Prince, were not a lawful occasion of taking up Arms against him; That he ought to reduce him by Reason, or to wait for some Change of Fortune; that he could not have recourse to force, without doing himself a very great injury; and bringing entire ruin upon *Sicily* besides. And to dispose him the better to relish these Maxims, he endeavour'd to make him pleasant and gay by innocent Divertisements; and above all, by the Conversation of his Nephew *Pseusippus*, which was very agreeable, and this succeeded for some time.

After *Dionysius* had ended the War, he fear'd the Treatment he had given *Plato*, would give him discredit among the Philosophers and make him pass for their Enemy, therefore he sent for the most Learned Men of *Italy*, and held Assemblies in his Pallace, where he strove by a foolish Ambition to surpass 'em all in Eloquence, and depth of Knowledge, and impertinently utter'd what he had retain'd of *Plato's* Discourses: But these having place only in his Memory, without reaching his Heart, the Source was soon exhausted. He then became sensible of what he had lost, in not making a better improvement of that Treasure of Wisdom, and in not retaining it with him. So that he began to long for *Plato* again with extream impatience; which he signified to him by frequent Letters. *Plato* excus'd himself on account of his Age, and of the failure of *Dionysius* in not performing any thing that he had promised. In fine, *Dionysius* not able to bear his Refusal any longer, oblig'd *Archytas* to write to him, and

and to engage his Word, that he might come in safety, and that *Dionysius* would perform his Promise to him. At the same time he sent a Galley with some of his Friends, of which number *Archidemus* the Philosopher was one; they assur'd *Plato* of *Dionysius* his vehement Love to Philosophy, and presented the following Letter from him.

What I desire with the greatest ardor is, that thou wouldst suffer thy self to be persuaded to come speedily into Sicily. I will do for Dion whatever thou shalt desire; for I am persuaded thou wilt desire nothing but what is Just, to which I will always very readily submit: But if thou refuse to come, I declare to thee, that I will never do any thing that shall be agreeable to thee, either in the Affairs of Dion, or in any thing else wherein thy Interest is concerned, &c.

This Letter, which favour'd more of a Tyrant than of a Philosopher, would have had an effect contrary to his wishes, if *Dion* had not added his Solicitations, and Entreaties, conjuring *Plato* not to abandon him; and if all the Philosophers of *Italy* and *Sicily* had not written to him, that if he refus'd to come, he would render 'em all suspected in the mind of *Dionysius*, who would certainly imagine, that he had insinuated them into his favour, only that they might betray him. And it was this that determin'd *Plato* to go the third time into *Sicily*, when he was Seventy Years of Age.

His Arrival rais'd the hopes of all the People, who flatter'd themselves that his Wisdom would at last subdue the Tyranny they were under; and *Dionysius* express'd, on this occasion, a Joy not to be describ'd by Words. He order'd him to Lodge in the Apartment of the Gardens, and had such Confidence in him, that he allow'd him access to his Person at all times without being search'd. *Plato* immediately us'd all the Address he had to know if he had a true desire of becoming Vertuous. He

* tells

* tells us himself after what manner he made the Tryal of it; but he soon perceiv'd, that he was called thither only out of Vanity, and to deprive *Dion* of the Society of a faithful Friend. When he would have propos'd the recalling of this Exile, he was so far from accommodating his Affairs, that he entirely ruin'd 'em. *Dionysius* forbid his Intendants to send *Dion* his Revenues, on pretence that all his Estate belong'd to his Son *Hipparinus*, who was his Nephew; to whom by consequence he was the Natural Guardian. *Plato* highly provok'd by this Act of Injustice, desir'd leave to be gone. *Dionysius* promised to order him a Vessel, but put it off from one Day to another, and after he had thus amus'd him for a considerable time, he one Day told him, *That if he would continue with him one Year longer, he would send Dion all his Estate, provided he would place it in Peloponesus or at Athens, that he should only enjoy the Revenue of it, and that he should not have power to take away the Principal, without the consent of Plato and his Friends.* For, said he, *I cannot trust him, but am jealous he would employ this Money against me.* *Plato* accepted this offer, but *Dionysius* deceiv'd him again; for after the Season fit for his Embarking was past, he said he would restore but one half of *Dion's* Estate, and would reserve the other half for his Son: And some time after he caus'd all he had to be publickly sold, at any Rate, and without speaking a word of it to *Plato*; who at length wearied with his Dissimulation and Lyes, and convinc'd that Philosophy was too weak and tender a thing to oppose to the rigour of a Tyrant, thought of nothing else but how to quit *Sicily*. But it was impossible for him to go without Permission, and a very difficult thing to obtain leave, new Obstacles being every day rais'd against it. *Dionysius* continued still in publick to shew him all manner of respect, and continually multiplied his Careffes. But at last *Plato* having warmly espous'd

* In his VII. Letter. Tom. 3.

the Interests of *Theodotus* and *Heraclides*, who were wrongfully accus'd of causing Troops to be Levy'd, their misunderstanding openly broke out. *Dionysius* order'd *Plato* to leave the Apartment of the Gardens, on pretence that the Ladies of the Court were to make a Sacrifice there, which was to continue ten Days; and appointed him a Lodging without the Castle in the midst of his Guards, that so (as it was suppos'd) the Soldiers, who had been long incens'd against him, because he was for having 'em disbanded, or their Pay diminished, might sacrifice him to their Resentment. Some Athenians warn'd *Plato* of his danger, and *Plato* instantly gave advice of it to *Archytas*, who was at *Tarentum*. *Archytas* immediately dispatch'd away a Galley with 30 Oars, and wrote to *Dionysius* to put him in mind, that he had promis'd *Plato*, that he should be entirely secure; and that he could neither detain him, nor suffer any Indignities to be offer'd him, without an open Violation of his own Word, of which he desir'd both him, and all Men of Honesty and Honour to be Guarantees. This awaken'd that remainder of shame which was in the Tyrant's Mind, so that he at last permitted *Plato* to return into *Greece*.

Thus much for the occasion of *Plato's* third Voyage; for which his Enemies have made so many Efforts to decry him; as if he return'd into *Sicily* only for the sake of the delicious Table *Dionysius* kept; and to immerse himself in all the Pleasures that reign'd in this Prince's Court. *Diogenes*, who had a great deal of Wit, but a very satyrical Genius; and who could not see the great State *Plato* liv'd in without Envy, was the first who thought good to throw this Reproach on him. For seeing him one day eat nothing but Olives at a great Feast, he said to him; *since the Love of Dainties made you go into Sicily, why do you despise 'em so much here? I assure you* *Diogenes*, replied *Plato*, *I for the most part eat nothing but Olives when I was in Sicily: What need had you then to go to Syracuse, says* *Diogenes? Was*

it at a time when Attica produced no Olives?

Never was any Calumny more ill founded than this; therefore an * Ancient Philosopher speaking of the Advantages of an active Life, made no difficulty of commending Plato for this Voyage of his, of the true Motive of which he gives us an account. For he says, *it was for one of his Friends, who was depriv'd of his Estate and banished, that Plato had the Courage to go and face a very formidable Tyrant, and to expose himself to his Hatred, and all the dangers with which that threaten'd him.* In the Letter which Plato wrote to Dion's Friends soon after this Voyage, he takes notice in express Terms, *That the splendid Tables of Italy and Sicily extremely displeas'd him; and that he could not without Horror look on the Custom these People had of filling themselves with Wine and Meat twice a day, and of abandoning themselves to all manner of Debauchery. When a Man (says he) has been accustomed to these Excesses from his Youth, 'tis hardly possible for him ever to be reclaim'd (how good soever his natural Disposition may otherwise be) so as to become temperate and wise: How much less may he pretend to other Virtues?* He afterwards adds; *My Life would be insupportable to me, if I were such a Slave to those Passions.*

As Plato pass'd through Peloponnesus he found Dion at the Olympick Games, and gave him an account of all the Proceedings of Dionysius. Dion more touch'd with the Injuries Plato had received, and with the Risque he had run, than with all the Acts of Injustice that had been offer'd to himself; swore he would attempt to be reveng'd. Plato did all he could to divert him from this Thought, but when he saw all his endeavours were in vain, he predicted to him what Miseries he was going to occasion, and declar'd to him, that he must not expect either Assistance or Advice from him; and since he had had the Honour to eat at the Table of Dionysius, to lodge in his Pallace, and to participate of the same Sacrifices

* Maxim. Tyr. ch. 5.

with him; he should always remember the Obligations to which this engag'd him: And that on the other hand, to answer the Friendship he had for *Dion*, he would stand Neuter, always ready to perform the Functions of a good Mediator to reconcile 'em, and always equally opposite to their Designs, whenever they went about to destroy one another.

* *Dion* gather'd some Troops together, went into *Sicily*, destroy'd the Tyrannical Government, expell'd the Tyrant, and restor'd Liberty to his Countrey. 'Tis well known what Mischiefs were occasion'd by this Enterprize. It being a difficult thing to preserve Justice and Innocence long, amidst the disorders of Arms, above all those of a Civil War; *Dion* had the unhappiness only by one Action to stain the Glory of all the rest; for he permitted the Murder of *Heraclides*, which did not remain long unpunish'd; for *Dion* was assassinated by *Callippus* the Athenian in the midst of his Successes and Triumphs.

After the Death of *Dion* his Relations and nearest Friends wrote to *Plato*, to entreat his Advice in the deplorable Condition to which they were then reduc'd; some of 'em having a mind to revive the Tyranny, and others using their utmost Efforts to re-establish the Popular Government. *Plato* wrote to 'em, † *That a State would never be happy either under a Tyranny, or too great a Liberty, that the Medium was to yield Obedience to such Kings, as were themselves subject to the Laws: that great Liberty and great Servitude were equally dangerous, and produc'd almost the same Effects; that the Obedience which was given merely to Men, was always excessive, and as exorbitant as their Lusts. That there could be no Moderation but only || in that Obedience which is render'd to God, who being always the same, always requir'd the same things at the hands of his Subjects: that it was only this that could make Nations happy.*

* See *Dion's* Life, in *Plutarch*.

† This is the 8th Letter. Tom. 3.

|| God's Yoke easier than Man's.

and that they who would obey God must obey the Law, that the Law was the God of Wisemen, and Licentiousness the God of Fools. That he therefore advised 'em to constitute three Kings, the Son of *Dion*, the Son of *Dionysius* who was expelled, and the Son of *Dionysius* the Elder, to chuse by their order such a number of Old Men as they should think fit, who should take the care of making Laws, and regulating the Government of the State, as the Kings should have the superintendance of Sacred and Religious Matters, and of all other things fir to be left at the Disposal of Benefactors. That it would after this be needful to create 35 Guardians or Conservators of the Laws, who should have the disposition of Peace and War, in conjunction with the Senate and People. That Criminal Matters should be judged by these 35 Conservators of the Laws, to whom there might be joined for Commissaries, the most aged and most honest of those Senators, that had laid down their Charge: That the Kings should not assist at these Judicial Acts; because being * Priests they could not, without defiling themselves, and derogating from their Character, condemn any one to Death, Exile, or Imprisonment. He also particularly enjoin'd 'em to drive out the Barbarians from all the Places they possess'd in *Sicily*, and to reestablish the ancient Inhabitants in their room.

Plato surviv'd *Dion* but 5 or 6 years, which time he spent in the Academy, not being willing in any manner to intermeddle with the Government, because he saw the Manners of the Citizens were very much deprav'd. The Cyrenians sent Deputies to him, to entreat him to go and give 'em Laws, which he refused, telling 'em, *they were too fond of Riches; and that he did not believe it possible, that so rich a People could be subject to the Laws.* The Thebans made the same Request to him, and he gave 'em the like Refusal; because, he said, *he perceiv'd they were too great Enemies to Equality.* But He sent

* The Royalty joined with the Priesthood.

his Disciples into those places, where the People were in a disposition to conform themselves to his Maxims.

Plato was naturally an Enemy to Pride and Ostentation; and fought for nothing but Truth, Simplicity, and Justice. His Behaviour was courteous and sweet, temper'd with Gravity. He was never seen to laugh immoderately, nor to be extremely angry. One may judge of the Mildness of his Temper by the course he took for the Reformation of his Nephew *Pseusippus*, who was excessively debauch'd. When his Parents had turn'd him out of Doors, he took him to his House, and entertain'd him as if he had never heard a word of his Debauches: His Friends amaz'd and shock'd at a procedure that seem'd to them to carry so much insensibility in it, blam'd him for not labouring to reform his Nephew, and save him from utter ruine. He told 'em he was labouring more effectually than they imagin'd; in letting him see by his manner of Living, what an infinite difference there is between Vice and Vertue, and between honourable and base things. And indeed this Method succeeded so well, that it inspir'd *Pseusippus* with a very great respect for him, and a violent desire to imitate him, and to devote himself to the study of Philosophy, in which he afterwards made a very great progress.

His way of speaking was so agreeable and insinuating, that he never fail'd to make an Impression on those that heard him. One day as he was walking a little way out of the City, with some of his Disciples and Friends, He met *Timothy* the Athenian General returning from the Army in the greatest height of his Fortune, and at a time when the Athenians knew not how sufficiently to honour his merit, while they gave him the greatest Testimonies how much they admired and respected him. The General making a stop, would needs hear his Discourses, in which he insist'd, neither on Taxes, nor the equipping of Fleets, nor the subsistence of Troops, but on Vertue, and the Dominion a Man ought to have over his

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his Passions; whereby he only aim'd at the Explication of the Nature of the Chief Good. *Timothy* struck with the Truth and Elegancy of his Maxims, cry'd out, *O happy Life, O true Felicity!* by which words he signified, he was convinc'd that all the Glory and Honour he enjoy'd were nothing in comparison of the Happiness of a Philosopher, and that without the study of Wisdom no solid Good was attainable.

As Temperance is accounted the first Vertue of a Philosopher, so 'tis said of *Plato*, that he was always very grave and sober, and always liv'd a single Life; but there is reason to doubt whether his Celibacy was the Effect of his Sobriety and Chastity; for there are yet in being some Verses which he made on a certain Mifs of *Colophon*, nam'd *Archeanassa*, whom he lov'd, tho she was grown old. *I have* (says he) *with me Archeanassa the Mifs; Love still lies in ambush in her Wrinkles. How unhappy were you that were expos'd to her Glances in her Youth! amidst what Flames have not you liv'd?* He also lov'd another, call'd *Xantippe*. He requested her Favours in very pressing Terms, and with those fine Reasons which are since become the * common places of those lascivious Morals, which now reign on one of our Theaters, from whence they insensibly glide into our Cities and Houses, viz. *That Beauty is a Flower which very speedily withers; that if Persons don't make haste to love, they lose their Youth to no purpose, and that old Age comes swiftly towards us, to ravish our pleasant Days, and all our Delights from us.*

'Tis true, 'tis said to excuse *Plato*, that these Verses are not his, but compos'd by *Aristippus*, who imputed 'em to him to degrade him, and to revenge himself on him for his Railleries. But there is not much got by this Apology, if it be true that he had yet more Criminal Passions, and that he lov'd *Dion*, *Phaedrus*, *Alexis*, *Agathon*, and *Aster*. In the Ver-

* M. Despreaux in his Satyr against Women.

ses he made on 'em he expresses himself in such Terms as the heat of a poetick Fancy alone could not inspire. He writes thus to *Dion*, *Thou makest my Soul love thee even to Folly*. He says to *After*, *that he could wish himself to be the Sky, that he might be full of Eyes to look on him*; and expresses himself after a yet more licentious manner, when he speaks to *Agathon*. 'Tis true, after all, these Verses may be supposititious; but if they are really his, there is ground to believe they were only the Faults of his Youth, which are the less surprizing, because committed in an Age, wherein all *Greece* was tainted with horrible Enormities. *Socrates* and his Philosophy soon drew him out of this miserable State, by making him comprehend the horrid Evil of those brutal Passions. He was not content to be cured of 'em himself, but also labour'd to make others partake of the same advantage, and to furnish 'em with Remedies against this mortal Poyson: for he vehemently opposes them in all his Writings, and particularly in his first Book of Laws, where he condemns the Government of *Lacedemonia*, and that of *Crete*, because of their publick Exercises, * *which produc'd and fomented those abominable Flames in Women towards Women, and in Men towards Men, by a perversion of their natural use*. And he calls this detestable and infamous Crime; *one of the most audacious and execrable Sins, which Intemperance could cause to be committed against God*.

In the third Book of his Common-wealth, after he had prov'd that there is no Pleasure more furious than that which is caused by irregular Love, and that it is inseparable from Insolence and Intemperance: He adds; † *But true Love consists in loving that which is decent and becoming, and in loving according to all the Laws of Temperance and Musick*. Plato uses this Word to signify the perfect Accord with Reason and Harmony, which results from all the Vertues. *Nothing that is violent and furious,*

* Tom. 2.

† Tom. 2.

or that approaches Intemperance and Disorder ought to be tolerated, and consequently no Man ought to propose to himself any Criminal Pleasure. Therefore a Law should be made, permitting Men to love young People, provided they love 'em as a Father loves his Son; and that they have no other end but to incite 'em to every thing that is honourable and comely; and that they never give the least suspicion of any vicious thought, or criminal desire. And that if they make a default herein, they be look'd on as infamous persons, who have renounced all Honour and Virtue.

Plato deserves to be highly commended for having lov'd his Brothers with an extream tendernefs; for as 'tis said of *Pollux*, that he would not be a God alone, but chose rather to be a Semi-Deity together with his Brother, and to share with him in a mortal State, that so he might make him partake of his Immortality; *Plato* in like manner was willing to communicate to his Brothers the Glory which himself only was capable of acquiring by his Works. In his Books of a Common-wealth he ascribes some very considerable parts to *Adimantus* and *Glaucon*; and he makes *Antiphan*, the youngest of 'em all, speak in his *Parmenides*, whereby he has render'd 'em all three as immortal as himself.

He never employ'd his Wit to revenge the personal Injuries he receiv'd, but to revenge those that were offer'd his Friends, or the Truth. It can't be shown that he said one Word of *Timon*, who had often attack'd him. And he answer'd *Diogenes* his Witticisms only in a jesting way, without ever speaking of him in his Writings.

Plato one day having made a great Treat for the Friends of *Dionysius*; *Diogenes* came into the Hall where the Feast was kept, and his Feet being very dirty, chose to walk upon the finest Purple Carpets, saying, *I trample Plato's pride under my Feet*. *Plato* smiling made this Reply; *Thou tramplest my Pride under thy Feet with greater pride of thy own*.

Diogenes once requested some Bottles of Wine of *Plato*, who sent him three dozens. When *Diogenes* met him the next day; says he, *When one asks you how many twice two makes, instead of answering four, you answer twenty.* Thus under the Colour of returning him thanks, he reproach'd him with being too prolix in his Dialogues.

Plato having defin'd Man to be a *Two-leg'd Animal without Wings*; *Diogenes* got a Cock, cut off his Wings, and carried him to *Plato's* School, telling his Scholars, *that was the Man their Master talk'd of.* This Jest made him change his Definition.

Diogenes being reproach'd of continual Begging; whereas *Plato* never ask'd for any thing, answer'd thus. *The only difference between Plato and me, is, that I beg aloud, and he whispers when he begs.*

As *Diogenes* one day continued abroad in a very great Snow mixt with Hail, and abundance of People that saw him were pitying him; says *Plato*, *If you have any Compassion for him, look on him no longer*: thereby to reproach him, that what he did was not from any vertuous Principle, but out of Ostentation and vain Glory.

It being his perswasion, that Men were not born for themselves, but for their Country, for their Relations and Friends; he was far from authorizing the opinion of those who believ'd that Philosophy had a right of annihilating such essential Obligations; and taught that the Life of a Philosopher is the Life of a Man entirely devoted to the publick; who endeavours to become better, only that he may be the more useful; and that he shuns the hurry of Business then only when his Country refuses his Service, or when he is incapable of serving his Country to good purpose. And his own Practise was futable to this through the whole Course of his Life. For 'tis reported that he did not so much as excuse himself from bearing of Arms, and that he behav'd himself bravely at the Battel of *Tanagra*, that of *Cerinth*,
and

and that of *Delium*, where he obtain'd a considerable Victory ; but it is not known on what occasion ; for this Battel of *Delium* is not to be confounded with that which was fought before in the same place ; in which *Socrates* was engag'd, and sav'd the Life of *Alcibiades*, in the first Year of the *LXXXIX Olympiade*, *Plato* being then but five or six years old.

And he serv'd his Friends with as little concern for his own Life ; for he not only did all we have said before for *Dion*, but also defended *Chabrias* the Athenian General when impleaded at the Bar ; and when his Accuser *Crohylus*, to put him out of countenance, said to him, *Thou comest hither to defend others, little thinking that Socrates his Poyson is ready for thee.* He made this return ; *When my Country formerly had occasion for my Life, I readily expos'd it ; but there's no danger now before me to put me into a Consternation, and to make me desert my Friend.*

He would say there was nothing more unworthy of a Wise Man, and which ought to trouble him more than to have allow'd more time for unnecessary trifling and useles things than they deserv'd. Therefore he omitted no occasion of reproving such as he saw were vainly puff'd up on the account of those Qualities of which they rather ought to have been asham'd. And to this purpose 'tis said the same *Anniceris* of *Cyrene* of whom we have spoken before, who was a considerable Person both for his Birth, and for his Ingenuity ; but valued himself above all for being the best Charioteer in the World, having a knack to guide a Chariot above those of the best reputation in that Art, had a mind to shew his Dexterity in his Presence. A Chariot was brought for this purpose into a Close belonging to the Academy, where he made several Turns with that exactness, that the Wheels always ran in the same Track, and constantly describ'd the same Line. All the Spectators were charm'd and extoll'd *Anniceris* to the Skies by their Praises : But *Plato* seriously blam'd him, telling him

it was not possible but that he who had spent so much time in so vain and inconsiderable a matter, must needs have neglected other things that were very necessary and important; and that a Mind entirely taken up with such Trifles could not be capable of applying it self to any thing valuable, and truly worthy of admiration.

He was so free from the vice of Flattery, and the base and servile submissions of the Orators of that Age, who made themselves Masters of the People only by a mean and cringing Complaisance, and by conforming themselves to their Passions; that he was compar'd to *Epaminondas*, and *Agésilas*; who tho they travell'd to many Cities, and convers'd with Men whose course of Life and Manners were very different, yet wherever they were, still retain'd, in their Habit, in their Discourse, and in all their Behaviour, what was worthy of themselves, and suitable to their Character. For *Plato* was the same Man at *Syracuse* that he was in the Academy, the same with *Dionysius* as with *Dion*: A certain sign that the Maxims of his Philosophy, which were full of Force and Vertue had penetrated his Soul, like a deep Tincture, which nothing can either efface or tarnish.

During his last stay in *Sicily*, *Dionysius* having a mind to Regale all Persons of chief Note in his Court, and all his Philosophers, *Plato* and *Aristippus* were invited among the rest. In the midst of the Feast the Tyrant order'd Purple Robes to be brought and given to all the Company, desiring to see 'em dance. *Plato* refus'd the Robe that was presented him, saying, *it would too much dash him out of Countenance to see himself apparell'd like a Woman*. *Aristippus* made no such Scruple, but took the Robe and fell a dancing, saying, *a very wise Woman would never be disrespected for her dancing*.

Plato has been accused of three things, first that his Humour was too Satyrical, which render'd his Writings more piquant than the Strokes of ancient Comedy,, and the more unworthy of a Man of Honour,

nour, in that he did not spare his best Friends; for instance when in his *Phædon* he is speaking of *Cleombrotus* and *Aristippus*, he says, *they*^{*} *were not present at the Death of Socrates, because they were at Ægina.*

The second thing with which *Plato* is reproached, is an envious and jealous Disposition, which made him incapable of enduring an Equal or Partner in any thing whatsoever; and engag'd him tacitely to contradict *Xenophon*, without ever giving one word of Commendation to the Vertue of that Great Man, notwithstanding his extraordinary Merit.

The third thing objected against him, is that many of his Disciples were possessed with a Spirit of Tyranny; *Euphræus* for Instance who was at the Court of *Perdiccas* King of *Macedonia*, had as much Authority as that Prince himself, and would not suffer him to entertain any but Geometricians and Philosophers at his Table; which provok'd *Parmenion* to kill him after the Death of *Perdiccas*; and *Callippus* who kill'd *Dion* to make himself King of *Syracuse*; and *Evagon* of *Lampsacus* who having lent Money to his Countrey, upon the Cittadel, that was given him for his Security, would have employ'd this Fort against it to subject it to himself; and *Tymeus* of *Cyzicus*, who having made a free distribution of Corn among the People, would have abus'd the Favour and Authority which that procur'd him, to make himself their Tyrant: And in fine *Chæron* of *Pellene*, who having cruelly brought his Countrey into subjection, drove away the best Citizens, and gave their Estates and Wives to his Slaves.

Let's examine the first of these Reproaches. *Plato* is perhaps the only Person who was ever accused of two Faults directly opposite, and which are destructive of each other. *Athenæus* has accus'd him of being too Satyrical, and others have blam'd him for being too mild, and for having taught a very considerable time without displeasing any one; by which he would insinuate that his Doctrine was not good, or

Plato defended against the Reproach of being too Satyrical.

* See *Plato Phæd.* at the beginning.

that

that his method was bad, since nobody either in hearing or reading him had felt that trouble which naturally arises from the Sense of one's having been vicious. But without troubling my self to confute or reconcile these Contradictions, I shall only say, that *Atheneus* was himself in an ill humour, when he cast this Reproach upon *Plato*: And I shall make use of the same words against him, which this Philosopher us'd against *Anytus* who accus'd him of having been guilty of Calumny. * *He knows not what it is to calumniate, for if he did, he would not accuse me of that Vice.* And indeed *Plato* did no ways slander *Themistocles*, *Pericles*, and *Thucydides*, when he made use of them as Instances to prove, that Vertue could not be attain'd, merely by Instruction; since these Men had not made their Children learn it. As for that word he spoke against *Aristippus* and *Cleombrotus*, besides that the turn of it is very fine, it must be ascribed to that Love and Gratitude *Plato* retain'd towards *Socrates*, which made him highly resent it, that his two Friends had not attended their Master at his Death, because they were at *Ægina*; which by the manner of his Speech one would take to have been at a hundred Leagues distance, tho indeed it was near the Gates of *Athens*. And as occasion offers, we shall hereafter examine all the other Satyrical Touches *Atheneus* charges on him. Not that I pretend to cross *Plato's* Name out of the number of Satyrical Writers: For on the contrary I am perswaded that never any Man had a finer knack at Raillery; that the most refin'd Satyr is to be learned in his Works, and that none can teach it better than he. He may be compar'd to *Aristophanes* himself. But it will be no difficult matter to make it appear, that as he never threw his Darts against any but Men of profligate Lives, who by abusing their Character, corrupted Youth, and ruined Religion: He is so far from deserving Reproaches on this account, that he deserves to be highly

* In Menon.

prais'd. Wise Men, as a Learned * Father of the Church observes, ought not to give soft and flattering Touches; but on the contrary to give Wounds and Pains to those who are fallen into great Faults, and cannot be otherwise excited to Repentance and the practise of Vertue. Those Discourses which instead of carrying pungency and Reproof in 'em, are only calculated to sooth and please, are not becoming a Wise Man, since *Solomon* himself says, *The Words of the Wise are as Goads*. Besides does not every one know that Laughter is the just Recompence of Ignorance when accompanied with Pride and Vanity.

The second Accusation has no more Justice in it than the first, for 'tis chiefly founded on this, that *Xenophon* and *Plato* wrote on the same Subjects. For each of 'em made an Apology for *Socrates*, each made his Banquet and Treatises of Morality and Policy. If to make Books on the same Subjects on which others have treated were always a sign of an envious and jealous Mind; this Reproach would rather fall on *Xenophon*, who did not write of the Education of *Cyrus*, till after he had seen the two first Books of *Plato's* Common-wealth.

And it would be no very easy matter entirely to justify *Xenophon* from this spirit of Envy, when one reads the Fragment of a Letter which he wrote to *Eschines*, in which he extreamly inveighs against *Plato*, and charges him with having corrupted the Philosophy of *Socrates*, by intermixing that of *Pythagoras*, and makes the end of his going into *Sicily* to be the Enjoyment of the Delicacies of *Dionysius* his Table. To these Invectives of his *Plato* makes no answer, nor speaks one Word of *Xenophon*; in

* *St. Jerome* on that Passage of the XII Chap. of *Eccles.* *The Words of the Wise are as Goads.* Simul & hoc notandum est, quod dicantur verba sapientium pungere, non palpare, nec molli manu attrahere lasciviam, sed errantibus & tardis pœnitentiæ dolores, & vulnus infigere. Si cujus igitur sermo non pungit, sed oblectationem facit audientibus, iste non est sermo sapientis, verba quippe sapientium ut stimuli.

which

which his Modesty can scarce be enough commend-
ed; and perhaps this Silence was the chief thing that
incensed *Xenophon*. For the greatest Indignity one
can offer a Writer is (not to say some ill thing of
him, but) to say nothing at all to him. 'Tis true,
Plato in one place writes, that *Cyrus* was a good
General, but that he never had a good Education;
by which some pretend he design'd to deny *Xeno-
phon's* Treatise of the Education of *Cyrus*; but this
being made only to give the Idea of a great Prince,
and not to pass for a true History, *Xenophon* could
not be offended at a thing which he believed as well
as *Plato*. In fine, that which yet more discovers
with what Spirit *Xenophon* was animated against him,
is the frightful Description he makes of *Menon*, in
the 11th Book of his Retreat; where he accuses
him of having betrayed *Clearcus*, and of having
been the Cause of his Death. *Menon's* Misfortune
proceeded from the Intimacy of his Friendship with
Plato, who had praised him, and inscribed his Name
on the Dialogue he compos'd, concerning Vertue;
for his pretended Treachery is not at all well prov-
ed, and he was sufficiently justified from it by his
Death. Not that I pretend to accuse *Xenophon* of
Calumny and Imposture: these Vices are not to be
found in a Man of Sobriety and Religion; but the
Hatred or Jealousy he conceived against *Plato*, dis-
pos'd him insensibly to receive all Reports, that
were made against such as were engaged in strict
Friendship with him. However if *Menon* had been
as bad as *Xenophon* describes him to have been, since
his Villany was not known till after his Death, it
can't be charg'd on *Plato* as a Crime, that he had
spoken in his Praise.

Some moreover support this Accusation, in say-
ing, that *Plato*, who speaks of almost all the Philo-
sophers that preceded him, and refutes their Senti-
ments, speaks not one word of *Democritus*, tho fre-
quent Occasions presented of saying something of
him. This is also built on the Testimony of *Aris-*

toxenes,

toxenes, who in his historical Commentaries, wrote that *Plato* would have burnt all the Books of *Democritus* which he could heap together, if he had not been prevented by *Amyclas* and *Clynias*, two Pythagorean Philosophers, who represented to him, that it would signify nothing to burn 'em, since they were in the hands of a great many other Men. And this is counted more than enough to make it believed that *Plato* hated *Democritus*, and was jealous of his great Reputation. For my part I confess this Fable of *Aristoxenes* seems to me to be very ill invented: A Man who has a mind to commit his Rival's Books to the Flames, does not seek for Witnesses to such an Action. Besides this silence of his of which they speak so much, seems a very doubtful Business. If the Glory of *Democritus* had touch'd *Plato* so sensibly, why did he not take the advantage of so many occasions, that were fairly offer'd him to diminish it, or to cast some blot on it, by writing against him, and destroying some one or other of his Principles? An Author is seldom Master of that Repentment with which the Glory of a Competitor inspires him. 'Tis a very difficult matter to come to a certain determination of things that depend on a thousand Circumstances, of which we are wholly ignorant; but that which appears to me most probable is as follows. 'Tis affirm'd, that *Democritus* never went to *Athens*, or if he went thither that he was always unknown, and never discover'd himself so much as to *Socrates*. 'Tis moreover very well known, that when *Hippocrates*, who was now much advanc'd in years, went to *Abdera* to confer with *Democritus* about the Folly that was imputed to him; this Philosopher was not yet known in *Greece*, nor had his Works been brought thither. If they had been published, they would have sav'd *Hippocrates* the trouble of this Voyage; for they would have discover'd the great Wisdom of their Author, and the Stupidity and Ignorance of the People, who founded this Accusation of Folly only on those Sentiments,

timents, which this Philosopher explain'd in his Writings : Now the Death of *Democritus* was not long before that of *Plato*. In a word, I don't think any Passage of Antiquity will make it appear, that the Writings of the former were known at *Athens*, during the Life of the latter. Nay I am of opinion, that there are not wanting some Proofs among the Ancients, that shew they did not begin to make a noise in the World, till after the Birth of *Epicurus*. Whence we may conclude, that *Plato* was so far from hating *Democritus*, that he never knew him, nor ever saw any of his Books.

It would not be so easy to justify *Plato's* procedure towards *Eschines*, if that with which he is reproach'd were true. 'Tis said he was so jealous of the Reputation and Credit which *Eschines* had acquired in the Court of *Sicily*; that he made it his business to seek his ruine by his Insinuations to *Dionysius*; and that he push'd this malicious and envious Humour so far, that he attributes those Discourses to *Criton*, which are pretended to have been held by *Eschines* with *Socrates* in Prison; but this being supported only by the Testimony of one *Idomeneus*, one of *Aristotle's* Schollars, 'tis more just to guide our Judgment by *Plato's* Vertue, than to suffer our selves to be prejudic'd against him by mere Calumnies. Would *Xenophon* have forgotten a Circumstance that might have done so much honour to *Eschines*, and cover'd *Plato* with so much shame? And have we not in *Plutarch* the Discourse which *Plato* made to *Dionysius*, to engage him to be kind to *Eschines*, and to give him some Marks of his Esteem? Nothing is more opposite to that Magnanimity, for which *Plato* has been commended, than this Spirit of Envy. Let us see how he himself speaks of the Envious, in the * 5th Book of Laws. *While the Envious Man thinks to exalt himself above others by Detraction and Calumny, he wanders out of the Path of true Vertue, and balks the Courage of his Competitors,*

* Tom. 2.

when

when they see themselves treated with so much Injustice; and as he by this means extinguishes all that noble Emulation which the whole City appear'd to have in this glorious Contention of Vertue, he dispirits it, and diminishes its Resolution and Vigour, as much as in him lies, and renders it less ardent in the pursuit of Glory. Can one accuse a Philosopher of Envy, who scarce names himself in his own Works, and who attributes all his own Inventions and Notions to his Master?

* The third Accusation is still worse founded than the two former. The Condition of a Philosopher would be very deplorable; if he were to answer for all the Actions of his Disciples. None of their Faults can be justly charg'd on him, but those which they committed in pursuance of his Opinions. The Instance of *Dion* only may be sufficient to acquit *Plato* of the charge of a Tyrannical Spirit. What could any one have done more than *Dion* did to induce *Dionysius* the Elder and his Son after him to govern justly, that they might firmly establish their Dominion? and when he had taken up a resolution to expel the latter, could any one more vigorously oppose this design than *Plato* did? Besides, 'tis a great piece of Injustice to make *Calippus* pass for one of *Plato's* Disciples, contrary to what this Philosopher himself says in his 7th Letter, in which he assures us that it was not by the study of Philosophy that *Calippus* acquir'd *Dion's* friendship; but as it usually happens by civil Conversation, he having gone often in his Company to the Theater, to Sacrifices and other religious Rites; and they being both addicted to the same kinds of Pleasure.

There is not only injustice in this Accusation, but also either a great deal of Ignorance or a great deal of Disingenuity. Could *Athenens*, who had read and collected so much, be ignorant after what Manner *Xenophon* defends *Socrates* against his Ene-

* The Faults of *Plato's* Disciples ought not to be thrown upon him.

mies who charg'd him with all the Violences and Injuries of *Critias* and *Alcibiades*, laying the guilt of 'em upon him, on pretence that they had been his Disciples? and if he knew this, ought not he to have made use of the same Maxims to justify *Plato*? As there is some Justice in imputing to Masters the Miscarriages of their Scholars, when they become guilty of 'em by following their Opinions and Principles; so on the other side 'tis just to ascribe to 'em their great and noble Actions, when they are the fruit of their Precepts. *Plutarch* therefore is more just than *Athenus*, when he places to *Plato's* Account, all the great things his Disciples had done. His Words are remarkable and entirely overthrow all the Criticism of this Censor. * *Plato* (says he) *had left fine discourses of Laws, and the Government of States; but he had imprest still finer on the hearts of his Disciples. These curious discourses engag'd Dion to restore Sicily its ancient Liberty; and Python and his Brother Heraclides to deliver Thrace from Tyranny by killing Cotys. Chabrias and Phocion, those two Great Athenian Captains, came out of the same School. Plato gave Laws to the Arcadians by his Disciple Aristonymus, to the Elians by Phormion, to those of Pyrrah by Nemedemus, to the Cnicians by Eudoxus, and to those of Stagira by Aristotle. Nay, the Rules of governing well which Alexander desir'd of Xenocrates, were only Plato's Precepts. And he that kindled that Prince's Courage, and perswaded him to make war with the King of Persia, was Delius the Ephesian, an intimate Friend of this Philosopher.*

Athenus carried his Malignity and Envy yet farther; for he writes, that *Plato's Timeus*, his *Gorgias*, and his other Dialogues of the like kind, in which he treats of the Mathematicks, and of Natural Philosophy, are not so much to be admir'd, as 'tis commonly said they are: for he says the same things are to be found elsewhere, as well explained, if not better; and he assures the World, that *Theo-*

* In his Treatise against *Colotes* the Epicurean.

pompus

pompus of Chio writes, that the greatest part of his Dialogues were false and useless, because some of 'em were taken from *Aristippus*, others from *Antisthenes*, and others from *Bryson*. He adds, that when one expects in his Writings the Morals and Wisdom of a Philosopher, one finds nothing but Banquets, and Discourses about Love, which have a great deal of Indecency, and very little Chastity in 'em, which he compos'd to the great undervaluing of the Judgment of his Readers.

I will not now say the Judgment of *Theopompus* ought to be suspected, because the Ancients have accus'd him of Malice and Calumny; and therefore *Plutarch* says of him, 'tis safer to believe him when he praises, than when he accuses any one. Let *Plato's* Dialogues be taken as much as he pleases from *Aristippus*, *Bryson* and *Antisthenes*, since their Works are not now extant, the Testimony of *Theopompus*, contrary to *Atheneus* his Intention, proves that these very Dialogues which he has so much condemn'd are now the best, and most considerable Work on those Matters, that is to be found among the Ancients.

And if *Atheneus* passes a Judgment on 'em only of his own head; I'll venture to say, 'tis not the first Fault this Author has committed, who is more to be commended for his vast Learning, and great Collections which were the product of a prodigious Reading, than for his Accuracy and Wisdom in his critical Reflections, and for the Solidity of his Judgment. Is a Man well qualified to judg of *Plato's* Writings, when he dares to write, that he can't see what advantage can be drawn from the Immortality of the Soul, since after its separation from the Body, it has no more any Remembrance or Sensation?

As to what he says of the indecent Discourses *Plato* has made of Love to the great undervaluing of the Judgment of his Readers; his aim was to decry the Dialogue of the *Banquet*; but by this he disgraces himself more than he does that Dialogue. For

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besides that he discovers the Corruption of his Heart; he makes it appear that he was ignorant of the beauty and design of that Dialogue; the end of which is only to disengage us from the Love of Earthly Beauties, and to raise us to the Love of the Sovereign Beauty which is God himself. No one I believe will hesitate in his choice between the Judgment of *Athenews*, and that of *Origen*, who in his Excellent Preface on the Song of Songs, speaks of *Plato's Banquet* in these Terms. *Divers Learned persons among the Greeks, who were desirous to penetrate into Truth, have written Dialogues about Love, to show that 'tis this only that can raise our Souls from Earth to Heaven, and that 'tis only by the help of this, that true Felicity is attainable. The Questions that are started at Table on this Subject, are made by persons not so greedy of Dainties, as curious to occasion fine Discourses. Nay some of 'em have taught in Writing, the Ways and Arts of producing or augmenting this Love in the Soul. But Men of carnal Inclinations perverting these Arts have employ'd them to satisfy their Lusts, and abus'd 'em to promote an infamous Conversation. Therefore it is not to be wonder'd at, if with us among whom there are so many more ignorant persons, as there are more illiterate; a Treatise of Love has some danger attending it; since among the Greeks, who are so Learned and Wise, there have yet some been found, who have mistaken these Dialogues, and interpreted 'em in a sense quite different from that in which they were written, and who, taking occasion from what is said in 'em of Love, have fallen into a Snare, whether they truly found in these Writings any thing that incited 'em to Sin; or whether the Corruption of their Hearts hinder'd 'em from understanding 'em.*

This Apology strikes at *Athenews*, whom *Origen* without doubt had in his Eye; when we publish *Plato's Phedrus* we shall examine whether that Censure past on it by *Dicearcus*, *Aristotle's Disciple*, in affirming (as *Diogenes Laërtius* reports) that the

Question

Question handled in this Dialogue is Puerile, and the Character of it Extravagant, ought to be received; and whether *Cicero* had reason to embrace the Sentiment of this Critick, and to tax *Plato* with having given too much Authority to Love.

Let us then without stopping at what has been written against *Plato*, endeavour to know him by his own Works.

Before the Age in which *Pythagoras* liv'd, Morality was treated on only in Sentences and Enigmas: Therefore *Solomon* says, a Wise Man will * understand the words of the Wise, and their dark sayings. *Pherecydes*, and his Disciple *Pythagoras*, who had brought Treasures of Knowledge with them when they return'd from their Travels, from *Babylon*, *Egypt* and *Persia*, were the first that open'd a door to good literature among the Greeks. It was from them, and especially from *Pythagoras*, that the first Beams of Truth shin'd out in *Greece*. Morality was then considerably improv'd, yet it consisted only of Precepts wrap'd up in Obscurity. The Method of Reasoning and Demonstrating was not yet in use. This dry way (if I may so term it) of handling Morality, was occasion'd by the Application of Men's Minds then only to the knowledge of Numbers, Natural Philosophy, and Astronomy. *Socrates* was the first, who upon the Reflection he made, that that which happens without us, does not nearly concern us; and that the study of it is more curious than useful, applied himself more particularly to the study of Morality, and handled it more methodically in his Discourses. *Plato* his Disciple being convinced of how great Importance it was to preserve to Mankind so precious a Treasure attempted to write of it. And that he might do this to the greater advantage, and might the better retain the Air of him who had revived this Science, prefer'd the way of writing in Dialogues, to all other Methods of treating a Subject: for besides,

* Prov. 1.6.

that it is the most diverting manner of writing, in that it as it were exposes a Scene, in which all the Actors are seen to perform their parts ; one may say it is best fitted to attain the end, which is to persuade and instruct, that it is animated with the most Life, and hath all the force of contrary Opinions, wherein the two Parties defend themselves as much as they will, or can, and consequently the Victory obtain'd by one over the other can be no longer contested, at least when the Dialogue is made by a Man of great sense, and who makes it his only business to enquire after Truth. Before *Plato's* time this manner of writing was very little known in the World : None had practis'd it but *Zeno* of *Elea*, and *Alexamenes* of *Teos* ; but the Politeness, Elegancy and Beauty which *Plato* gave to this way of Discourse, occasioned the Glory of this Invention to be ascribed to him, so that he has been look'd upon in all Ages as the first that ever made Dialogues.

There are two sorts of Truth, that which is already known, and that which is yet unknown to us, and after which we are searching. This difference constitutes two principal Characters of *Plato's* Dialogues. Those of 'em that treat on known Truths, are called, * *Explicatory, or Instructive Dialogues*; and those that handle such Truths as are yet unknown, but enquired after, are called † *Inquisitive Dialogues*. Each of these two kinds is divided into divers Species, according to the Subject of which they treat, or the manner of treating of it. For the Instructive Dialogues, either have Speculation for their End, and then they are divided into ‡ *Physical*, and || *Logical*, or Action, and then they are divided into ^a *Politick* and ^b *Moral* ; and the Inquisitive Dialogues are destin'd, either to ^c *Exercise* or ^d *Contest*. Those that are made for Exercise are again of two sorts; in some of 'em *Socrates* exercises the Mind after

* ὑπογρηγορικοί. † ζητητικοί. ‡ φυσικοί. || λογικοί.
^a πολιτικοί. ^b ἠθικοί. ^c γυμναστικοί. ^d ἀγωνιστικοί.

such

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such a manner, that he causes all sorts of Truths to be produced in it, which 'tis capable of finding out it self when well assisted. Therefore he calls himself the *Midwife of Minds*, jocosely alluding to the Employment of his Mother, who was a Midwife; and these Dialogues are called **Obstetrical Dialogues*. Or else he exercises it only in making it sound, and just perceive the Truths in which he is willing to instruct it; and these are called † *Dialogues of Essay*. In fine, those that are destin'd to contest, are also of two sorts; the one kind are fram'd to accuse certain Persons, and to expose certain Vices, and are therefore called ‡ *Dialogues of Demonstration, or of Accusation*. These are properly satyrical Dialogues, made for the Reader's Diversion; exciting in his Mind at the same time, a just Contempt of those whose Vices are discover'd to him; and others are calculated to refute and overthrow Errors, and are therefore call'd || *subverting Dialogues*. And this is the division that has given a third Title to these Dialogues; for they have three. The first is the name of the principal Person. The second is taken from the Subject, and the third is what I have been just mentioning, and expresses the Method and Turn of the Dialogue, and of what kind it is. 'Tis only the first of these at most which is Plato's, the last of 'em was impos'd by the Platonick Philosophers, and is very ancient, as we see by *Diogenes Laërtius*, who knows only this and the first. The second is altogether modern. It was given by some that were but little acquainted with the Doctrine of this Philosopher, and were often mistaken. For Instance, at the head of *Gorgias*, they place this Title, *Gorgias of Rhetorick*; whereas the Ancients cite it only under the name of ^a *Gorgias Subversive*. And 'tis so far from being true, that *Gorgias* was made to teach *Rhetorick*, that on the contrary the design of it is to expose and overthrow the ill Principle,

* *μαιευτικῇ*. † *πειραστικῇ*. ‡ *ἐνδεικτικῇ*. || *ἀνατρεπτικῇ*.

^a *ῥητορίας ἀνατρεπτικῆς*.

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by which the Orators were conducted, who then governed all the Cities of *Greece*; and 'tis a Dialogue purely moral; but this Subject shall be treated more at length in the Argument which shall be placed at the head of every Dialogue.

Having explained the Titles of these Dialogues, 'tis needful to say something of the different division which the Ancients have made of 'em. Some have put 'em into Fours, being of opinion that *Plato* had respect to the Tetralogies of the Ancient Tragical Poets, who compos'd four pieces on one and the same Subject for the four great Feasts of the Athenians; but I can't imagine that a great Philosopher should have so frivolous a Reason. Others have divided 'em into Threes; and 'tis certain that in his Works there are three Dialogues found that properly make but one and the same Treatise, as his *Theætetus*, the *Sophist*, and the *Politician*. In the first *Socrates* examines and refutes various Definitions of Science. In the second he establishes divers Definitions of the Sophist, which serve to shew the Art of dividing and defining, and at the same time of making the Sophists ridiculous. And in the third he defines a Politician or Statesman, and there is nothing wanting in this Treatise, because the Statesman can't be well qualified without being tinctur'd with Philosophy. The ten Books of a Common-wealth, which are look'd upon as only one Dialogue, are yet apparently one and the same Treatise with his *Timæus*, *Atlantius*, or *Critias*. In the first, that is in the long Conversation about a Common-wealth, *Socrates* gives the Idea of a perfect State. In *Timæus* he supports his Rules and Principles by the knowledge of Nature which he communicates; and in *Critias* he confirms this knowledge of Nature, and those Rules of Morality and Policy by the Authority of ancient History, or that I may use *Plato's* own Words, the Books of his Common-wealth form good Citizens; his *Timæus* discovers to them the Creation of the World, that this Knowledge may fortify in their Minds the Principles

ciples he has given 'em; and his *Critias* proves to 'em by ancient History, that such was the Life of their first Ancestors, that is of the first Athenians, who liv'd before the Deluge, whose Example he recommends to their Imitation. And it was after this manner, that the greatest of Legislators compos'd the Lives of the Ancient Hebrews and Patriarchs. Excepting these six Dialogues, the three first of which make a Treatise of Logick, and the three last a very methodical Treatise of Morality; I don't think any others of 'em can be connected together by the Continuance of the same Subject: They are all separate and independant, in respect of the matter of 'em, and have no mutual Correspondence or Resemblance, but by the Method or Manner of treating their Subjects, which has been already sufficiently explained.

Plato affirms that which is certain, refutes that which is false, examines that which is doubtful, and does not pronounce any thing on that which is uncertain, or has but little probability.

His first Maxim is not to give one's Consent, but only to evident and certain Truths, and to disengage one's Mind from all kinds of Prejudice. *The Maxims of Plato*

The second is never to attempt to handle Questions which 'tis impossible to decide.

The third is to distinguish well between what we know, and what we are ignorant of; and not to believe we know what indeed we don't understand.

From these Maxims it follows, that *Plato* believed there were certain Truths, and consequently, that there were such Principles as might be term'd *Dogmata*. That is, he affirm'd some things to be absolutely true; but because he entirely follow'd *Socrates* his manner of disputing, and all along avoided the decisive Air of the Sophists and Dogmatists, who affirm'd every thing, almost continually taking simple Probabilities for Truth, he seems positive in nothing in his Writings, in which by his Doubts he endeavours to convince his Adversaries of the

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the Errors he designs to refute, and to make 'em of themselves discover the Truths he has a mind to teach ; and thus that Passage of *Cicero* ought to be understood, who in the first Book of his *Academic Questions*, says, *in Plato's Books many things are said Pro and Con, but every thing is doubted, and nothing ever affirmed.*

The Ancients inform us, that *Plato* follow'd *Heraclitus*, in things that fall under the Cognizance of the Senses, that is in natural and sensible Objects: *Pythagoras* in intellectual things, which can't be comprehended but by the understanding ; and *Socrates* in those which are only dictated by Reason, that is in Morality and Policy ; and this deserves to be explained.

Plato followed *Heraclitus* in natural and sensible things, that is, he believed with *Heraclitus*, that there was but one World, that all things were produced of their Contraries ; that Motion which he calls War, causes the production of Beings, and Rest their Dissolution ; and in fine, that our Senses are very subject to be deceived, and that there is no certain Truth in their Depositions.

He followed *Pythagoras* in intellectual Truths ; that is, he taught, as this Philosopher did, that there is only one God, the Creator of all things ; that the Soul is immortal ; that Men ought continually to labour to purify themselves from their Passions and Vices, that they might be united to God ; and that after this Life there is a Reward for good Men, and a Punishment for the Wicked ; that between God and Men there are different orders of Spirits, who are the Ministers of that first Being. Seeing he drew his Notions from the same Fountains, namely from the Egyptians and Hebrews, 'tis not to be wonder'd at, if he had the same Doctrine.

But if *Plato* followed *Pythagoras* in his Sentiments, he also imitated him in the manner of explaining them: For he deliver'd 'em only in Enigmas, and under the Vail of Mysteries, Figures and

and Numbers, that he might not expose such sublime Truths to the Raillery of wicked and profane Men, and might discover 'em only to such as were worthy to learn 'em, and who would give themselves the trouble of unfolding them. * 'Tis not reading of Books, says he, that will communicate this great Knowledge; it must be attained by profound Meditation; and every one must for himself draw this Celestial Fire from its true Source. For by this Union with its Object † a divine Flame, (kindled on a sudden, as from a Fire that spreads it self round) illuminates the Mind, and feeds and preserves it self therein. And for this reason, as I have never yet written, so I am resolved never to write on these Matters: That is, to explain them after a clear and intelligible manner. ‡ Whoever undertakes it, will never do it to any purpose; and all the Good he'll reap by his Labour will be, that, excepting a small number of Men whom God has endowed with Understanding, capable of unravelling those Celestial Truths of themselves, he'll cause some to despise 'em, and fill others with a vain and rash Confidence, as if they understood wonderful things, when indeed they are unacquainted with 'em.

This method often causes great obscurity in the writings of this Philosopher, which he has indeed taken care to augment, in chusing to make use of some terms that signify contrary things. And this is the reason why he can't please young People, who have not yet attain'd Judgment enough to discern the Beauty and Solidity of his Dialogues; nor grown men neither who have not had the preparation of those Studies that were necessary, before they attempted to read him, and who are not capable of Reflection and Meditation. For this reason *Antiphanes*, one of Plato's Friends jocosely compar'd his Writings

* Tom. 3. † This is what David says in the 35th Psalm, *In thy Light we shall see Light.* There is none but God, that can enlighten the Minds of Men. ‡ A Remarkable Passage. Plato is not for writing on the Mysteries of Religion, and those of Nature.

to a City, in which Mens words freez'd in the Air as soon as they were pronounced, and the following Summer when they came to be warm'd and melted by the Beams of the Sun, the Inhabitants understood what had been said in the Winter; for *Plato's* Discourses ought to be warm'd, and as it were melted by the rays of an understanding well exercis'd, if one would know the true sense of 'em.

In fine, he imitated *Socrates* in what relates to Morals and Politicks, that is, he reduc'd every thing to Morality, and made it his whole business to engage men to fill up the Duties they ow'd to the State in which Providence had cast their Lot.

'Tis pretended that *Plato* to his Natural Philosophy and Morality added Dialectick; but this ought only to be understood of his bringing it to perfection: For *Socrates* had the use of Dialectick before *Plato*; as appears by his proving and refuting so solidly in Conversation what ever he had a mind to establish or overthrow. How can it be imagin'd that Truths were discover'd and prov'd before *Plato* and *Socrates* without the help of Dialectick? 'Tis impossible.

These are then the three parts of the Philosophy of the Academicks, Morality, Natural Philosophy and Dialectick; and these three parts make Philosophy compleat, in which one can't so much as imagine a fourth. Natural Philosophy respects Speculation, Morality Action, and Dialectick is useful both for one and t'other. For 'tis by means of this that we distinguish Truth from that which has only the Appearance of it, both in Morality and Natural Philosophy. And many Ages before *Plato*, the Philosophy of the Hebrews was likewise divided into three parts, Reasoning, the Knowledg of Nature, and Morality.

The Morality of the Platonicks.

The Platonicks make the Perfection of Morality to consist in living in conformity to Nature, that is to the Will of God the only Author of Sovereign Happiness; and they teach that the Scope of all our Desires should be to obtain of Him those good things that

that are necessary for Soul and Body, and for our State of Life, Thus they divide Good, into that which is divine and that which is humane,

Humane Goods are distinguished into Goods of the Body, and Goods of Life. The Goods of the Body are Health, Beauty, good Humour, Strength, &c. The Goods of Life are Friends, Riches, in fine, every thing that serves to advance Vertue, and set it on work. For they teach that a man is not born for himself alone; but is united to all other men by Society, which renders him a member of one and the same body, to the Advantage of which he ought to refer all his Actions, and Thoughts.

Divine Goods are the Goods of the Soul, that is, every thing which renders the Soul capable of knowing, loving and embracing that which is good and lovely, &c. And they divide these Goods, into those of Nature, and those of Morality. The Goods of Nature are the Imagination and the Memory, which properly depend on the Mind; and the Goods of Morality are those that are procured by study and the habit which is form'd by Exercise and Reason. That which has made but a slight Impression they call a certain motion toward Vertue; and that which is finished is what they term Vertue; which is the perfection of Nature, and the most excellent of all Goods.

Humane Goods are subordinate to Divine; and when once a man has these he has all the other; the first of 'em all is Prudence, the second is Temperance: from these two mix'd with Courage springs Justice, which is the third, and Valour is the fourth. They teach that Divine Goods can't be given by men, and that they are not to be acquired by our Labour; that they are given only by the favour of God, and that they ought to be sought at his hand alone.

So that they do not equally esteem these three sorts of Goods, but prefer those of the Soul before the two others, as infinitely more considerable, and which alone ought to be sought for themselves.

Hence

Hence it comes, that they make the Happiness of Life to consist only in Vertue, tho at the same time they maintain, that it cannot be very happy without the Goods of the Body, and the other that are necessary for the use of Vertue; and from thence arises an indispensable Obligation to Labour, and to fill up the Duties which Nature imposes: An Obligation which engages us to avoid Idleness, and to condemn criminal Pleasures; and which necessarily disposes us to suffer all sorts of Labour and Pain too, for that which is just and honest. From whence Friendship, Justice, and Equity result, which they prefer to all the Pleasures and Advantages of Life.

There is nothing more solid and sublime than these Morals, which make the chief Good to consist in being united to God, in obeying his Commands, and in receiving with Submission whatever comes from his hand; because all God's Acts towards Men are useful to 'em, if they know how to make an Improvement of 'em.

Plato every where insinuates a disinterested frame of Mind, and the Contempt of Riches; and teaches to postpone all the Gold in the World to the least Vertue. He is for a Man's exposing himself to Death in the defence of Justice, and in maintaining Laws, Order, and the Publick Good; and would have us avoid, not only all criminal Pleasures, but Delicacy, Idleness, and too much Sleep. We find his Writings full of Precepts of Truth, Chastity, Temperance, Modesty, Patience, Meekness and Humility; but these Precepts are accompanied with Proofs. For he utterly overthrows the Principles of ill Morals, after he has propos'd 'em in their full Strength; and this is the way of Perswasion that becomes a Philosopher.

Almost every thing in his Doctrine is worthy of Christianity. * That which he says of the Duty of honouring Parents, deserves to be recited. *The fear*

* Precepts of the Honour due to Parents 11th Book of Laws.
Tom. 2.

of God is the Foundation of that Duty which Children owe their Parents; and if the Gods are pleas'd with the Respect which is render'd to their Images, which are only dead Representations of the Deity, how much more do they rejoice in those Honours which are given to Parents, who are the living Images of God; and the older they are, the more Force and Efficacy have these living Images of the Deity (who are kept in the House like the most precious Jewels) to make all sorts of Blessings descend on their Children, who give 'em the Reverence which is due to 'em; and to bring upon their heads the most dreadful Curses, when they refuse it. For God hears the Prayers which Parents address to him either for or against their Children. So that there is no surer way to please God than to honour our Parents, and whenever they are respected 'tis very grateful and acceptable to God himself. The way of honouring them duly, is to love them more than our own Children, or our selves. And they who fail in this Duty shall be brought to the Magistrates constituted for this purpose, who shall take care to punish 'em.

He every where maintains, and particularly in his *Gorgias* and *Criton*, that no injury is to be offer'd to any man, no not to such as deal injuriously with us, and makes it appear, that to introduce this Maxim into civil Conversation, that 'tis lawful for a Man to revenge himself and render Evil for Evil, is to pretend to lay a foundation for Justice in innumerable Acts of Injustice, and to open an inexhaustible Source of Crimes, and Acts of Violence. What Bank would be strong enough to stop such an Inundation of Wickedness, and what end would there be of Injury and Revenge? He carries his Proofs of this Matter so far, that his Disciples assure us, that he that revenges an Injury, is more criminal than he that offers it.

*Revenge
forbidden.*

He teaches that if a man have any degree of Wisdom, he will never undertake the least thing without the Invocation of God; and that if Prayer is necessary before every ordinary Action, 'tis much more so when

*The Necessi-
ty of Prayer.*

we

we are about to speak of God, because 'tis God that illuminates our Minds, 'tis he that assists us, and without him we can do nothing. He well understood the Necessity and Beauty of that Precept of *Pythagoras*. * *Begin all thy Actions with Prayer, that thou mayst be able to accomplish 'em.* Prayer and Action ought to be inseparable; want of Prayer renders Action useless, and want of Action renders Prayer ineffectual. We ought to ask what we do, and to do what we ask. But he at the same time affirms, that Men are so blinded by their Passions, that they know not how to pray well, unless God instructs 'em; and therefore the truest Prayer, and that which alone can be agreeable to him, is to request of him to perform his own Will in us, and not ours.

The most considerable thing in Morality is the political part of it, the true use of which *Plato* endeavours to shew, and to reestablish it in that Perfection from whence it fell by the Corruption of Men. In the time of this Philosopher, Injustice had overturn'd all the States of *Greece*; so that there was not one Government left that deserv'd to be approv'd. *Plato* in opposition to this disorder gave a perfect Model of a most just form of Government, that all States might correct the Vices of their way of Government by this Pattern. To this purpose he employs his Books of a Common-wealth, and those of Laws; in which he after a wonderful manner reconciles Policy to Religion, which is the very Basis of it.

*Princes
can't govern
well, but as
they imitate
God.*

He shews that Princes and Governors of States, can never conduct the People well, but by imitating the King of Kings, the Sovereign Lord of the World, the only and perfect Model of all Wisdom and Justice. For as a Sheep is not capable of guiding the whole Flock, which ought to be under the Conduct of a Shepherd; so one man is not capable alone of conducting others, who all together

* *Pythagoras his Precept.*

ought

ought to be subject to God. One would think he had read that Complaint made by the People of God by the Mouth of * *Isaiah*, as the greatest of all Miseries, *O Lord our God, other Lords besides thee have had Dominion over us.*

† He renders this Truth sensible by a Fable in which the Vestiges of the Truth of ancient History are easily discern'd. *The Memory of the happy Course of Life the first Men led is preserved to our Time. They were abundantly provided for without any Labour; the Earth spontaneously furnished them with all Necessaries: And the Cause of their Happiness was this; Saturn well knowing that there was no Man that could have an Absolute Empire over others, without abandoning himself to all sorts of Violence and Injustice, subjected the Nations not to men, but to more noble and excellent Beings, as their Lords and Kings; namely to intelligent Spirits (or Angels) after the same manner as we deal with our Cattle; for as we don't set a Bull over a whole Herd of his own kind, nor a Goat to govern a Flock of Goats; but put those of one kind and another under the Conduct of a Man; so God who loves Mankind plac'd us at first under the Conduct of Angels, who with marvellous Facility, and without any trouble to them, took a great deal of care of their Affairs, and by making, Peace, Chastity, Liberty and Justice reign among them, kept all sorts of Troubles and Seditions at a distance from them, and render'd their Lives very happy. This Fable which is founded on ‡ Truth, clearly shews us, that those Societies which yield Obedience to Men and not to God can never be happy, and will never find the end of their Miseries; and farther intimates, that if we will be happy, we must with all our might imitate that manner of Life Men led under the reign of Saturn; and that according to that Immortal Principle which is in us, we*

The Cause of the happy Life of the first Men.

What the Reign of Saturn is,

* *Isa. 26.* † In the 4th Book of Laws, Tom. 2.

‡ For the Nation and Kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish, *Isa. 60. 12.*

should govern our Families and Cities according to its Dictates; taking this wise Dispensation of the Under-
standing for our first and chief Law. For if a King,
if Nobles who govern in an Oligarchy, or if the Peo-
ple who are supreme in Republicks, think of nothing
but how to satiate their Passions, and drown them-
selves in Sensuality, and run like mad men after such
Pleasures as only irritate their insatiable Intempe-
rance: 'Tis impossible they should forbear to trample
on the Laws, and there can be no safety to such as
obey 'em.

The choice
of Priests
and Ma-
gistrates.

He gives admirable Precepts for the Establishment
of Priests and Magistrates; he would not have such
chosen, who have nothing to recommend 'em but
their Birth, their Riches, Credit, or Power, but
would have the choice of 'em regulated only by
their Merit and Piety. * Those are the best (says
he) who yield the greatest Obedience to the Laws,
and excel all the rest of their Fellow-Citizens in that
respect. The first places ought to be given to those
of the first Rank, the second to those of the second
Degree, and so of the rest in proportion, as every
one distinguishes himself, and is disposed to look on
himself, not as Master of the Laws, but as their
Servant. For wherever the Law is Mistress, and
the Magistrates its Servants, there States are observ'd
to prosper, and abound with all the Blessings one can
expect from the hand of God: Whereas in all places
where the Magistrate is Master, and the Law his
Servant and Slave, there nothing is to be expected
but Ruin and Desolation.

† He would have none made Priests till they are
sixty years of Age. He says, they should be lawfully
begotten, and without any bodily Imperfection;
that they should be such as have been educated in
chast Families, and have their hands free from the
stain of Blood, that they should not be tainted with
any of those Pollutions that are offensive to God;
and are incompatible with the Sanctity of their Cha-

* Tom. 2.

† IV Book, Tom. 2.

rafter;

rafter; and that their Parents should be such as have liv'd with the same Purity of Conversation.

He proves, that those Laws which are made solely for the Profit of the Legislator, and not for the Publick Good, are not properly Laws, but the Product of Self-Love and Injustice.

He shews, that of all Governments the Monarchical is the most perfect, because it approaches nearest to the first Model; but that the Power of it ought to be mitigated by the Law which is to govern as the Supream Reason.

Monarchy the most perfect of all Governments.

After having shown the Good and Evil of all known Governments, he maintains, that all political Schemes which tend to render the Ruler powerful to the detriment of the Subject, and which make all the Vettue of the Sovereign to consist in confirming and augmenting his Power, leaving Justice, Patience, Goodness, Fidelity, and Humanity to private Persons, as Vertues only becoming Slaves, are no better than open Tyranny; and that the end of true Policy is to make all the Members of the Community live together in Society as so many Brothers, after the most happy manner that can be, without either Poverty, or very great Riches, according to the Rules of Justice and Holiness. To engage Princes to employ Men according to the different Talents they discern in them, he * relates this Fable, which he calls a *Phœnician Lie*, because 'tis † taken out of the Books of the Hebrews. Hear (says he) *this Fable, you who are the Inhabitants of this City; you are all Brethren, but God who created you mingled Gold in those who are worthy to command; therefore they are the most excellent and honourable. He mingled Silver in those who are capable of assisting them in their Functions; and Iron and Brasses in those who are fit for nothing but to be*

The end of his true Policy.

To employ Men according to their Talents.

* 3d Book of Laws. Tom. 2. † Eusebius shows that Plato deriv'd this Fable from what God says in the Prophecy of Ezekiel, ch. 22. v. 18. Son of Man the House of Israel is to me become Dross; all they are Brasses and Tin, and Iron and Lead.

Husband-men and Artificers : And as we are all Parents, we have ordinarily Children that resemble us ; but it also sometimes happens, that he who is mix'd with Gold, has Children who are only mix'd with Silver ; and he who is mix'd with Silver, hath Children mix'd with Gold, and so of the rest. That therefore which God in a special manner recommends to Princes, is to take stricter notice of their Children than of any thing else, that they may well discover what was mix'd with 'em in their first formation ; that if they perceive Iron or Brass in it, they may not shew 'em any pity, but place 'em in the Rank to which they were destin'd by Nature, and make 'em Husband-men, or Artificers ; and as for such as are found to be temper'd with Gold or Silver, that they should destine some of 'em to govern, and the rest to assist and ease them by their Ministry ; there being an Oracle which predicts, that the City shall perish when under the Government of Iron or Brass.

*A defect in
Plato's Po-
liticks.*

This Treatise is full of admirable Maxims, and such as are worthy to be ingraven on the Hearts of all Mankind. 'Tis true, there is one very considerable defect in it, in that Plato to take away *Meum* and *Tuum* from the Government which he forms, institutes a Community, not only of Estates, but also of Women and Children. This Notion was not entirely Chimerical, since it had already been put in practice in part among the *Lacedemonians*, and some other Nations ; but that does not excuse it from being a most vitious Usage ; for the Authority of Custom can't render that Good which is in its own Nature Evil. This Community of Things and Persons can't conduct this Law-giver to the end he proposes, but on the contrary sets him at a greater distance from it, and makes him lose the advantage of all he has before established ; for instead of uniting his Citizens this divides 'em, by breaking asunder all Relations, and all the most sacred Ties of Nature, and trampling on Laws, and Religion, Honour and Decency. Before the Christians shew'd their

their Indignation against a Maxim so full of Wickedness and Error, the Pagans discerned the falshood of it; for *Aristotle* attacks it in the II Book of his Politicks. Nay *Plato* himself abandons it in his 6th Book of Laws, where he restores all that honour to Marriage of which he had before divested it.

Besides this Fault, there is another taken notice of, and that is the Education of Women, to whom he assigns the same Employments as Men committing to 'em the Command of Armies, and the Government of States. He founded this Notion on a Maxim of *Socrates*, who held, that Women were capable of the same Vertues as Men, tho they can't carry them to the last Perfection. Excepting these two things, which yet occasion very solid, and very useful Reflections, there is nothing among the Writings of the Pagans, which better deserves to be read, and retained, than *Plato's* Book of a *Republick*, and those of *Laws*: They have a Beauty on 'em that may be called Divine; and indeed they appear to be a Copy of a truly divine Original. For this * *Republick* of which *Plato* gives an Idea, is the true Draught of the Common-wealth of the Hebrews under the Conduct of *Moses*. We see in both the same Simplicity of Manners, the same way of living, and the same end propos'd. The Miseries of both proceed from the same Causes; that is only from the Disobedience of the People; and their forgetfulness of their principal Duties; and their Prosperity always springs from their diligent Attendance on the same Duties, and their readiness to obey. But here is one thing that seems to be very remarkable. *Plato* will have his wise Man to be of a wonderful Genius, and Temper; he must have had a miraculous and divine Education; he must from his Youth have given Marks of his great Zeal for the Publick Good; he must be fit, both for a Contemplative and Active Life; he must be an E-

Moses the Model on which Plato forms his wise Man.

* *Plato's Republick*, the Draught of that of the Hebrews.

nemy of Grandeur, and attain it only by Obedience; this Obedience must be the occasion of his taking the Conduct of a People; he must govern them according to the Institutions of God to whom he is only a Vicegerent; Religion must be the principle and end of all his Enterprizes; he must have both Severity and Meekness; he must be arm'd with Courage and Temperance, with Justice and Wisdom; and must make it his business to render those whom he governs the Friends of God. And these are the principal Strokes in *Moses* his Picture; so that if the Idea of our Philosopher does honour to this Legislator, and his People whose Grandeur he represents; one may say the Truth accomplished in one and t'other does yet more honour to the Philosopher, by shewing his great Wisdom, and the extent of his Mind. If *Plato* had had this Idea without any knowledg of the History of *Moses* (which yet I do not believe) nothing can be imagined greater; he would be more than a Man. And if he form'd it only on this History, which he had read, or learn'd by Tradition in *Egypt*; it was a very great Demonstration of his Wisdom, that he discern'd the Beauty of it, and follow'd it as a Pattern.

Religion
founded on
Revelation.

4th Book of
Laws,
Tom. 2.

As *Moses* regulated the People of God, so *Plato's* Wise-man regulates those under his Conduct. First he instructs them in Religion, about which he establishes nothing without having consulted God; that is nothing but what is conformable to true Traditions, and ancient Oracles. He fortifies them against the Poyson of the Theology of the Poets who intermix Lies with the Truth, and against the Religion of credulous and superstitious People. He teaches 'em to believe there is one only true God, who being infinitely Good loves Mankind, and is willing to render 'em happy, and who as he is also infinitely Just makes none happy but those who resemble him, and punishes such as dishonour the sacred Character he had imprinted on 'em. He tells 'em that God as

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we are taught by ancient Tradition * having in himself the beginning, the middle and the end of all things, always goes on his way according to his Nature without ever stepping aside: He is followed by Justice which never fails to punish the Transgressions committed against his Law. Those who would be Happy, ^{The Recon-} conform to this Divine Justice with † Humility; ^{pence of Ha-} whereas he that becomes proud because of his Riches, ^{mility.} Honours, or Beauty (for Beauty often betrays young people into Extravagancy and Folly) and who has presumption enough to think he has no need of a Guide, but is capable of conducting both himself and others, is entirely abandon'd of God for his Pride. A ^{The Punish-} Man in this condition joins himself to others who are ^{ment of} tainted with the same Vice; and ‡ turning all things ^{Pride.} upside down with extreme boldness, and most horrible presumption, he comes to be look'd upon by the people as some great person: But soon after by the just judgment of God, he is seen to destroy himself, to subvert his own House, and to involve the whole State in his Ruine. He explains to 'em the Punishments that are reserved for the Wicked. They are not limited (says he) to the Miseries of this Life, nor to Death it self, from which even Good Men are not exempted; for these are Penalties too light, and short; but they are horrible Torments which shall never have an end. He encourages them by the hope of Rewards, and an everlasting state of Felicity. He takes so great care of 'em that he obviates every thing that might occasion 'em to call in question the Divine Providence, and throw 'em into Impiety. One would think he had copied out of David's

* This is what God says in Isa. 41. 4. *I the Lord the first, and with the last I am he.*

† Plato here employs the same term, which the sacred Writers use, to express one who is of a humble Spirit, ταπεινός; so that the Pagans, not only knew the name of the Vertue, but the Vertue it self.

‡ Plato here admirably well represents the Misery and Littleness of some Men, who think themselves great, and appear so in the Eyes of the People: And shows, that there are no Men truly great but such as humbly submit to the Divine Law.

11d Book of
Laws,
Tom. 2.

Psalms; for thus he speaks to a Young Man not well instructed in the Divine Conduct. *You have in you a Nature which having something Divine in it, leads you to believe the Gods, but the prosperity of the Wicked, whose happiness is so much boasted of, tho they are indeed very miserable, is ready to lead you in- to Impiety: You can't see profligate Persons arrive at extreme Old Age without meeting with any remakable Calamity, and leave their Children's Children after 'em, Heirs to their Estates and Fortune; you can't see all this (I say) without being shaken by it. You have often heard say, and have often seen with your own Eyes, that the meanest Persons have ascended Thrones by their Crimes; and upon this you dare not down-right deny the Gods, nor accuse them of being the cause of this; for there is something in you, that restrains you from this, and opposes it: But you are so far seduced and deceived by your Folly and Ignorance, that while you confess there are Gods, you reduce your self to say they are regardless of hu- mane Affairs. A Remedy ought to be speedily appli- ed to remove this Distemper, before it has time to grow upon you, and so to precipitate you into the Abyss of Impiety. Perhaps it will be no difficult matter to prove, that the Gods extend their Care and Regard to the smallest things as well as the greatest. And that the divine Nature being Vertue it self, ex- tends its Providence over all.*

Proofs of
Providence.

Tom. 2.

And indeed he proves this with wonderful Solidi- ty. I'll only give an Abridgment of these Proofs, which have yet more force in the Original. If God (says he) should take no care of Men, it would be either through Malice, or Ignorance, Weakness, Neg- ligence or Laziness: But none of these Vices, which are in us, can be found in God, who is infinitely perfect; who is Goodness, Knowledg, Wisdom, Pow- er, Providence, and Activity it self. He takes care of all things, for he created them, and they are his. How then can he neglect Men, who belong to him in a more particular manner? Has God less Capacity,

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or is he less diligent than Artificers? By how much the more knowing these are; by so much the more perfect are their Works, whether small or great, they forgetting nothing that may conduce to the Improvement of 'em. And shall God, who is most wise, most knowing, and has a Power proportionate to his Will, regard only the greatest things; and neglect others which may be still more easily mended; as if he was idle, and affraid of giving himself trouble? This is followed with other admirable Proofs, which it would be too long to relate. In fine, he * shows, that sooner or later God renders to every Man according to his Works. The Righteous, who have been expos'd to Troubles in this Life are recompenc'd in the other, and the Wicked who have always enjoy'd the Pleasures of the World, are punished in Hell. This is necessarily infer'd from the Justice of God: 'Tis impossible to avoid this Judgment which the Gods have fix'd by that Providence which you oppose, and of which you shall one day be fatally convinced; don't suppose that it will negligently pass you by. † Tho you should seek a shelter by hiding your self in the deepest Caverns of the Earth; tho you should have Wings, and could fly into the Heavens to hide your self there; the Divine Providence would seize you every where; and you shall never avoid the Punishments you deserve; whether in this World, or in Hell, or in some other place yet more terrible.

God at the last Judgment renders to every Man according to his Works.

He afterwards shews, that not only they shall be punished who deny the Divine Being, dispute against Providence, or blaspheme God, by saying he suffers himself to be bribed by the Offerings of the Wicked, but also such as have heard these Blasphemies, and yet neglect to bring the Authors of 'em before the Judges who are set to punish 'em. He also institutes Penalties for those who by their own private

The Punishment of impious Persons stated.

The Punishment of such as bear Blasphemy without discovering it.

* Tom. 2. † This is what David says in almost the same Terms, Psal. 139. 7, 8. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? whither shall I flee from thy Presence? if I ascend up into Heaven thou art there, if I make my Bed in Hell, behold thou art there.

Particular
Forms of
Worship con-
demned.

In the 10th
Book of
Laws.

Tom. 2.

The Origin
of Supersti-
tions.

They are
mad, when
they are
merry.

Wild. 14.
27.

Domestick
Chappels
and Altars
forbidden.

Authority teach or practice in their Houses particular Forms of Worship, and to prevent this Inconveniency, he applies himself to discover the Cause of it. He says this commonly proceeds from Women, and weak Minds, when they find themselves in any danger, or under any adverse Circumstances; or when on the contrary they meet with unexpected Prosperity, or are in some transport of Joy; or in fine, when their Imagination is disturb'd by some fright, so that they fancy they have seen Spectres, either waking or sleeping. For such People as these when in this Condition, are wont to vow to offer the first thing that comes into their Heads: they promise Sacrifices and Images; and fill their Houses with Chappels and Altars; or set up particular forms of Devotion, which by degrees degenerate into dreadful Superstitions, or impious Novelties, which entirely ruin both Religion and good Manners; for what is it that can't enter into the head of a Man or Woman, that is weak or perverted? and 'tis for this reason *Plato* forbids Innovations in Worship, and makes this Law, *That no private person should have either a Chappel or Altar in his House, but when he has a mind to offer Sacrifices he must go into the publick Temples; he is to put his Victims and Offerings into the Hands of the Priests and Priestesses, to whose Care the sacred Altars are committed, there he must make his Prayers, where those that come to worship may join with him. For it does not belong to every Man to consecrate Altars; but 'tis the work of a very enlighten'd Mind.*

To cure Men of Superstition and Idolatry which then reigned so much in the World, *Plato* forgets nothing that might induce 'em to render God a rational Worship. For this purpose he endeavours to raise their Minds in giving them an Idea of God, which might in some sort agree with his Essence, which mortal Eyes can't see but very imperfectly. The strokes with which he forms this Idea are scatter'd up and down in all his Works. The principal

of

of 'em which I have collected are these that follow.

God is one, eternal, immutable, incomprehensible Being. He created and dispos'd all things by his Wisdom; he maintains and preserves all things by his Providence; he is in all places, and no place can contain him. He is all things, and yet he is none of those things which are by him, and have received their being from him. For he is greater than Essence it self: he sees all things, knows all things, and penetrates the most secret thoughts; he fills the Capacity of the Deeps, and the Immensity of the Heavens; all Knowledg, Good, Vertue, Light, Life are only in him, and are Himself. He is at the same time infinitely Good and infinitely Just. He loves men with a singular Affection; and created 'em only to render 'em happy: But as he is Holiness and Justice it self he makes none happy but those who resemble him in Righteousness and Holiness: And punishes those who have corrupted the sacred Character he had impress'd on 'em by creating 'em after his own Image.

What God is.

He says, none but God can cure all the Infirmities of Men.

He teaches that God nor only hates Liars, and perjurd persons, but also such as swear vainly and unnecessarily, and who debase and profane the Majesty of his Name, by using it rashly on all occasions, whereas it ought to be mentioned with all possible Sanctity and Purity of Mind.

Lies, Perjury and profane Swearing abhor'd of God.

The generality of Philosophers were divided about the Nature of the Chief Good: Some made it consist in the knowledg of Arts and Sciences, others in Pleasures, and others in Authority and Power. Plato opposes all these Errors; and shews that the Supreme Good is not to be found in the Sciences; seing these and Vices often appear together in the same Persons, and 'tis very common for Men to abuse 'em: He proves that Power can't render a Man happy without Justice; and shews that which Men call Pleasures, namely sensual Delights, are by no

What Pleasures are.

means

means of the nature of that Pleasure which can give us the Supreme Happiness : For they are the Consequence of Humane Weakness and Infirmary ; and may be called the Daughters of Sorrow : they are always hatching but never exist. 'Tis therefore a ridiculous thing to make the chief Good consist in that which has no Essence of it self, but only springs from our Miseries and Necessities. He moreover proves it by other Reasons no less solid, which may be seen in their proper place.

*In his
Phileb.
which is en-
tirely em-
ploy'd on
this Subject.
And in the
VI Book
of his Re-
publick.*

He does not content himself to shew wherein the chief Good is not to be found ; he also teaches where it is ; and the force of his reasoning is precisely this : The Chief Good must be perfect, self-existent, self-sufficient, the first and last end of all things ; and the only scope of all Mankind in general. Knowledg or Pleasure are the only things in which one can with any shadow of Reason make the Chief Good consist ; but it can neither be found in Knowledg without Pleasure, nor in Pleasure without Knowledg : It must therefore of necessity consist in that which unites these two things together, and possesses 'em in the highest degree, and that is God.

*In the VI
Book of the
Republick.
Tom. 2.*

Nay, says he, That Knowledg and Truth of which God is the Cause can't be the Chief Good, *for they are infinitely less beautiful and less perfect than God, whose Image they do but very imperfectly represent ; as Light is but a very imperfect representation of the Sun.* So that the Supreme Good, being greater, more august and more perfect than Truth and Knowledg, can be no other than God himself. Therefore it is not to be found but in God who is the sole Treasure and perfection of Light ; and the Author of true and solid Pleasures. Whence he infers that while we are on Earth, we can't acquire this Chief Good but after an imperfect manner ; and shall not enjoy it fully till after Death ; because we can't till then know clearly what we knew only obscurely during this Life : And this is one of his proofs for the

*In his
Phedon.*

the Immortality of the Soul; namely because it is capable of Action and Knowledg after Death.

But 'tis not enough for a Philosopher to point out the Supreme Good, unless he also shew the way of obtaining it; and this is what *Plato* does with marvellous Solidity. For he proves that, to be Happy, we must be united to God; that in order to be united to him, we must resemble him in Holiness and Righteousness; that to obtain these Gifts at his hand we must ask 'em in Prayer, and that our Prayers ought to be animated with Love; which he calls the Surest and most Effectual Course Men can take to lead 'em to Happiness: for a blessed Immortality is the fruit of Love. Therefore a Learned Interpreter of *Plato* highly commends *Socrates* for having known, that to raise our Souls to the Enjoyment of God, we must take Reason and Love for our Guides. Reason teaches us the right way, and hinders us from wandering out of it, and Love by its sweet Perswasions and insinuating Graces, makes us find all things easy, and softens the Labour and Toil, which is inseperable from the Conflicts we must go through.

In his Banquet.

Maximus Tyrius.

He shews, there is nothing more natural to Mankind than Love. They naturally love every thing that is fair and beautiful, because their Souls are deriv'd from the very Source of Beauty. But every thing that in some sort resembles this Primitive Beauty moves 'em more or less, according as their Souls are more or less strictly united to their Bodies. So that those whose Souls are most disingaged in every Beauty adore that Sovereign Beauty whose compleat Idea they have, and for which indeed they were born. And this Adoration produces in 'em Temperance, Fortitude, Wisdom, and all other Virtues. But those who sink down and wallow in Matter; and no longer preserve any Idea of the Sovereign Beauty, run furiously after imperfect and transitory Beauties; and without Fear or Wit plunge themselves into all sorts of Filthiness and Impurity.

In his Phedr.

I can't here stand to remark on each Subject the great Truths which are taught by this Philosopher, and deserve our Attention : What I propos'd to my self was only to relate a few of 'em ; to give some Idea of 'em, and hereby to excite the Curiosity of the Reader : The rest will be more advantageously seen in their Source.

Plato regulates all the Civil Affi-
ons of Life.

After he has with wonderful Accuracy established all that relates to Religious Worship ; he in like manner provides for what concerns civil Matters. He creates Magistrates, proposes Laws, and forgets nothing that may augment, and secure the welfare of the Common-wealth ; for he is not content only to regulate Marriages, Divorces, the Education of Children, Wills, Guardian-ships, War, Peace, and other principal Matters ; but descends into a surprising Particularity. And as we may observe that God has not left so much as one part of the Universe without imprinting on it the Characters of his God-head, that Men might by no means be ignorant of it ; so Plato has not left any part of humane Life, whether private or publick, without a Regulation by some Precept or Law, to prevent the Commission of Faults and Injuries in it.

XIth Book
of Laws.
Tom. 2.
The Duty of
such as find
a Treasure.

He determines what ought to be done with any thing one finds, which another has lost. He says, *if he should find a Treasure he would not touch it, till he had consulted the Diviners, and they had assured him he might appropriate it to himself. This Treasure (says he) has some Owner ; we must therefore wait till this Owner, or his Heirs come to demand it ; for we ought to obey the Law which says, Thou shalt not take away that which thou hast not laid down, and that other Law which is not less ancient. Thou shalt not take another Man's Goods. This Treasure in our Coffers is not so valuable as the Progress we make in Vertue and Justice ; when we have the Courage to despise it. Besides, if we appropriate it to our own use, 'tis a Spring of Curses to our Families.*

Because

Because Injustice reigns chiefly in Trade; he is unmindful of nothing that may prevent it; and goes so far as to forbid the Seller * *to make two Words, and falsly to commend what he is about to sell.*

To prevent the Manners of Foreigners from corrupting those of his Citizens, and that when these are corrupted the Laws may not be render'd useles by 'em, he does not permit every one to travel indifferently; but is for having the State make choice of those to whom this Liberty shall be granted. They must be above 40 Years of Age; they must be Men of Sobriety and Wisdom, and capable of remarking what is good in other Commonwealths; and they must make a faithful report of Things at their return; that the Laws that are received may be augmented or corrected by their Memoirs, and the Government by this means be brought to greater perfection.

Men rejoice when they are happy, and think themselves happy when they rejoice. Hence it is that they have such a propension to Pleasure. God compassionately accommodates himself to this so natural Inclination, and extracting Good out of Evil makes use of it as a very proper means to confirm Men in what is Good; and that they might never lose sight of the Religion which he established. So that to hinder 'em from throwing themselves into those Excesses to which Nature when abandon'd to it self carries them, he was pleas'd to institute Feasts for his People by *Moses*, and order'd him to regulate every thing to be observ'd in 'em. Tradition had preserv'd some remembrance of these Institutions, for some Vestiges of 'em are found in *Plato*, who attributes 'em to the Egyptians in his IId Book of *Laws*, where he complains of the too great Liberty that was allow'd the Poets in all the Cities of

Trade.

Travelling.

The Origin of Feasts, Shows, and Musick, &c.

* *Solomon* condemn'd the same abuse in the Buyer who slightes what he is buying, and after he has got it, boasts as if he had outwitted the Seller. *It is naught, it is naught (saith the Buyer) but when he is gone his way then he boasts.* Prov. 20. 14.

" Greece,

Tom. 2.
The care
which the
ancient E-
gyptians
took to pre-
vent all
sorts of No-
velties.

Greece, to keep young People under the Conduct of very pernicious Maxims by their Verses. He affirms that it was otherwise in *Egypt*, where there were very wise Laws to hinder this Corruption. "The ancient Egyptians (says he) knew that Children ought to be early accustom'd to such Gestures, Looks and Motions, as are honest and decent; and that they should not be suffer'd, either to hear or learn any other Verses, or Songs, but such as were fit to inspire 'em with Vertue. Therefore they took care to regulate the Dances and Songs that belong'd to their Feasts and Sacrifices. Nay, they push'd this Matter yet farther; for they never suffer'd any Painters or Statuaries to innovate any thing in their Art, to invent any new Subjects, or any new Habits. And hence it is (says he) that in respect of what concerns these Arts and Musick, you shall find no Work throughout all *Egypt* that has been made for ten thousand Years past, which is form'd any otherwise than those pieces which are made at present. They are all alike, they are neither fairer, nor more deform'd. The Art remains still the same, the Rules of it the same. And there is nothing more admirable, or more worthy of a good Law-giver, and of a wise Administrator of Governments than to have regulated and fixed all these Matters that have a regard to Pleasure, and particularly that which respects Musick: And to do this is the Work, either of God himself, or of some divine Man. So that all their Dances, all their Poesy, all their Songs were sanctified; and not the least thing was suffer'd which did not answer the design of the establish'd Religion, and which was not worthy of the Feasts that were celebrated by 'em. This indeed is a very remarkable Tradition; and *Plato* does not fail to make a very good Improvement of it; for he pursues the same design; and institutes Feasts for his People, that during the time of their Relaxation from Labour, they might render

render homage to God, and testify their Gratitude to him for all the benefits they received from his Divine Hand. He suffers nothing to be acted at these Feasts, but what was Sacred or Innocent. He forbids all such Poetry and Musick as might be injurious to the Honour of God, or dangerous to the Manners of Men; and only receives such as might tend to rectify and instruct the Minds of the People. The Ancient Hebrews used only Lyrick Poesie, which in singing the Praises of God, and those of Vertuous Men, raises the Courage, and excites Devotion. And this was also the only kind of Poesie in use among the first Greeks, as appears by a Passage of *Plutarch* in his Treatise of Musick. *The Ancient Greeks* (says he) *were unacquainted with the Musick of the Theatre, they employ'd this Art only in honouring the Gods, and in instructing of Youth; for there were then no Theatres in their Cities, Musick was reserv'd for the Temples where the Gods were honour'd in Songs, and where the Praises of vertuous Men were sung.* While *Plato* authorizes this Lyrick Poesie, he also receives other Poems which were already established, and which it was impossible to extirpate and destroy: But we shall see what precautions he takes to purge and to discharge 'em of that Poyson which render'd 'em so dangerous.

The Greeks being extreamly addicted to the pleasure of Musick, this inordinate Passion had made 'em receive all the Works of Poets and Musicians, which had at last so alter'd and transform'd the Ancient Poesie and Musick, that instead of that Wisdom, Gravity and Sanctity that reign'd in the Pleasures of their Ancestors, nothing was found in theirs but Folly, Effeminacy, and Impiety. *Plato* therefore seeks to re-establish this Ancient Purity, and is for a perpetual prohibition of any alteration in Musick. *It is not to be imagin'd* (says he) *what a weight and force there is in Plays and other Pleasures, either for the Support or Ruin of Discipline and*

The Poesie of the Ancient Hebrews.

The Poesie of the First Greeks.

VII Book of Laws. Tom. 2. Of what importance it is to regulate Plays, and the Pleasures of the people.

The pernicious consequences of the Gust Men have for Novelties.

Laws. If Alterations be suffer'd continually to be made in 'em; and young people be continually accusom'd to new Pleasures, every day to have new Pieces, new Ornaments, and Dances; and to esteem none but those who can furnish this unlimited Variety, there can be nothing more pernicious to a State, for this insensibly changes the Manners of young people; so that they can no longer endure any thing that is Ancient; and only value Novelties; and this opens a Door to all the most dangerous Errors both in respect of Politicks, and Religion.

These Alterations are dangerous in every thing; but especially in Musick, because all Musick being an Imitation, that only ought to be suffer'd, which imitates what is good and useful; the other being rather a Plague than a Play, which he explains after a sensible manner by this Example, which appears to me to deserve our attention.

Tom. 2. The way Plato takes to illustrate the horror of pernicious Plays.

If we should see (says he) at our Sacrifices, after the Victims were consumed in the Fire, a Man approach the Altars, and extravagantly utter Blasphemies and Impieties; should we not think all his Family would look upon this as a great Misfortune, and a very fatal Omen? That which is done in our Time in the publick Shows and Plays, is not much different from this. For after the Magistrates have Sacrificed, we see divers Choirs of Musick come, and in the view of our Temples and Altars they utter most execrable things against these very Altars, contradict the Principles of Religion by their Impious Maxims, and affect the Souls of their Auditors by their indecent Expressions, lascivious Dances, and their effeminate and voluptuous Tunes. Ought not this then to be abolished, and the Poets oblig'd to submit to

This passage is taken out of the III Book of his Repub.

other Rules? And since all Poets are not capable of knowing what is truly excellent and good; ought we not to make choice of such who in their Imitations can follow the Idea of Beauty and Decency? That young people may receive improvement by every thing, as being in a very advantageous place, and that all which

* I brews were n as wer also pr the cor 22, &

which strikes their Eyes and Ears arising from a good fund, that is from a Subject which is excellent in it self, may be like a good Air which having pass'd through wholesome Places, carries health along with it, and may insensibly accustom them to love and imitate those Discourses, and conform all the Actions of their Lives to them.

To this purpose he makes the following Law. *The VII Book of Laws about Songs and Dances.*
Let none be so insolent as to sing any thing besides our Sacred Hymns, or to alter and vary the received Dances any more than our other Laws, And if any one disobey this Statute, let the Conservators of the Laws, together with the Priests and Priestesses take cognizance of it.

To this Law he added another: Let no Poet in his Imitations, depart from any of the Maxims which the City has received as good and just; nor let him presume to shew his Compositions to any private Man * till they have been seen, and approv'd by Judges establish'd for that purpose, and by the Conservators of the Laws. *Tom. 2. A Law about Poetry, and Poetical Imitations. Judges established to judge of 'em.*

In the II Book of the Republick, he had made the same Law for those Poets who compos'd the Fables that were taught to Children: He was for having Judges to approve the Good and reject the Evil. *Judges appointed to judge of Fables.*

He uses the same Precautions about Comedies and Tragedies, as he does about Songs, Dances, and all other Imitations. He thinks Comedies necessary to make Men know what is ridiculous, and to expose Vices that are represented in 'em. For (says he) one can't know what is comely and serious, unless one knows what is indecent and ridiculous. And to acquire Prudence and Wisdom, we must know their *Comedies judged necessary, and why, VII Book of Laws.*

* Plato took this too from the Tradition of the Ancient Hebrews, for they had Judges appointed to try all new Pieces which were made either in Prose or Verse, and these received only such as were conformable to Religion, and rejected the rest. They also prohibited the singing of Hymns and Songs by any other than the common and received Tunes. *Enseb. preparat. Evangel. XII 22, & 23.*

The Life of Plato.

contraries. Not that any Man who has any tincture of Vertue can equally do what is good and evil, decent and indecent, but it's needful he should know these things for fear he should through ignorance fall into what is ridiculous, and should do or say any thing unbecoming him. But we'll make use only of Slaves or Mercenary Strangers to make these Imitations, and all free Men and Women shall be forbidden to be concern'd in 'em, or to learn 'em.

Tragedies
how receiv-
ed.

As for Tragical Poets (says he) who boast of imitating great and serious Actions; when any of 'em come into our City, and ask if we are willing to receive 'em among us, and see their Tragedies, what answer shall we make these Divine Men? Methinks we ought to make 'em this return. Friends, we are employ'd in Tragedies as well as you, and we make the best and finest we can, for our Policy is only an imitation of the most refin'd and excellent way of living; this is the true sort of Tragedy with which we are acquainted. So if you are Poets, we pretend to the same thing, and declare our selves your Rivals in that Noble Imitation which can be perfected only by the Law. Therefore do not hope to be so easily permitted to build Theatres in our publick Places, and to introduce Skilful Actors that shall extend their Voices beyond ours; and tell our Wives and Children, and all the people on the same Subjects, things directly opposite to our Instructions. We must be quite destitute of common Sense, before we can give you permission to Act, till the established Judges have determined whether what you say is good and useful, and whether it ought to be made publick or not. Therefore, You tender Darlings of the soft Muses, put your Compositions into the hands of the Judges, who will compare them with ours; and if what you say is better than what we say, we'll give you leave to Act; otherwise it can't possibly be done, and therefore 'tis in vain to expect it.

Those Poets
who in their
writings
contradict-
ed receiv'd
Maxims
condemned.

Plato has treated this business of Plays and Shows thoroughly, because 'tis a very important matter in relation

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relation to States; all he says of it is admirable, and deserves to be carefully recollected. What I have recited is sufficient to give a just Idea of it: Wise Men may make on it what Reflections they think fit: My scope has been only to show that *Plato* after the Example of *Moses*, would permit only such Divertisements as were decent, and tended to support Religion, or at least were not contrary to it. They who are for advancing farther, and for particularly examining the conformity the Laws of *Plato* have in many things, with those that were given the People of God, will still better discover this Resemblance; which made *Clemens Alexandrinus* say, that *Moses* assisted *Plato* in making his Laws; and that *Plato* was only *Moses* speaking the Attick Language. Not but that some Laws are to be found in *Plato* very remote from the Spirit of *Moses*, and very contrary to Equity: but the number of 'em is but small.

The Emperour *Marcus Aurelius* had reason to say, That *such a Commonwealth as Plato's is not to be expected in this World*. Not but that there had already been one which was still better, and more wisely constituted; and when *Antoninus* said this there was one infinitely more perfect, of which the former was but a shadow; but it was the work of God; and none but God can put this Idea into Act, because 'tis only he that can change the Hearts of Men: of which we have a very evident Proof. A great Emperour had a mind to establish *Plato's* Republick in his Territories, to which purpose he employ'd divers Philosophers whose Knowledge was very extensive, and their Eloquence very perswasive: but all his Efforts were in vain, he could never gain his end so much as to establish it in one single Village; whereas the Christian Religion was established by the Ministry of illiterate Men, and that in spite of the Emperours themselves.

As for Physicks in which also Metaphysicks are comprehended; *Plato* in the first place acknowledges that since we are but Men, we must not hope perfectly

Physicks.

fectly to gain the knowledg of Nature, and that all a Philosopher can do is to find out Probabilities; pure and simple Truths being only known to God, who alone can discover 'em to Men. After this acknowledgment he divides Nature into two parts, *Spirit* which acts, and *Matter* upon which it acts.

He calls the Spirit which acts, a Being eternal, infinite, very good, immutable, which hath neither beginning nor end, but is always the same, and he calls Matter, a Mass without form and void, which is always ready to be produc'd, and never exists. His Words are remarkable. *First* (says he) *all these things ought to be well distinguished, and we must well establish what it is that always exists and is never produc'd; and what it is that never exists, and is always producing. The first is not conceived but by the Understanding assisted by Reason. This we discern to be always one and the same. And the other is only opinable, that is known by Opinion assisted by the Sentiment divested of Reason; which we see to be always producing, and dying without ever existing. Therefore he gives Matter the Name of Other, because of the continual Changes it undergoes: He also gives it the Name of Necessity, because it only follows the order and determination of the Spirit which governs it.*

*In Timeus,
Tom. 3.*

*Matter how
known.*

*Why called
Other and
Necessity.*

*How said to
be Eternal.*

He also sometimes calls Matter *Eternal*, which has given occasion to some to accuse him of believing it to have been with God from all Eternity. But a Philosopher who in so many places maintains the unity of God could not fall into so gross an Error: If Matter were Eternal, it must then be God, and so there would be two Gods, contrary to what he had laid down. When therefore Plato calls Matter *Eternal* he would not be understood as if it visibly subsisted from all Eternity, but that it subsisted intelligibly in the eternal Idea of God; and in this respect the World is sometimes said to be *Eternal*. Let us see the very Terms Plato uses, which will leave us no room to doubt what his Thoughts were. The

Pattern

Pattern of the World (says he) *is from all Eternity; and the World, this visible World is from the beginning of Time, and will always thus subsist alone.* *In his Time-us, Tom. 3.*

Plato could not think Matter to be Eternal: seeing he affirms the Soul to be older than the Body; for if the Soul is older than the Body, the Body must needs have been created, and consequently can't be Eternal. And for this reason he calls God the Father or Creator, and Former of the World. By the Quality of Creator he signifies that he made the World out of Nothing, and by that of Former he signifies, that God after he had created it, gave it its Form and orderly Disposition. Plato derived this Idea from the Tradition of the Hebrews, of which the Greeks had some knowledg long before him; as appears from *Hesiod's* speaking of the Birth of the Chaos. Perhaps also he had read these Words in the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, *God himself that formed the Earth and made it, he hath established it.*

The World made out of Nothing.

Chap. 45. 18.

Of this created Matter God formed the World, by separating and disposing the Elements, which having simple qualities of themselves, form by their different Union, and various Figures an infinite number of compounded Qualities: for Matter is divisible to Infinity.

The Universe must necessarily comprehend all sensible things; from whence *Plato* draws three Consequences: The first is that it can be but one: For there can be nothing beyond All. The second is that it is of a Spherical Figure; because besides that that is the most perfect of all Figures, 'tis the only one that can agree to a Being that comprehends any thing. And the third is that it can have no end but only by the Will of him who form'd it; for since the Change of all Beings can never proceed but from that which is without 'em, and since there is nothing out of the World, there is by consequence nothing that can destroy it but God in whom alone the World is contained.

Seeing the two first Qualities of the World are to be visible and palpable; and since there is nothing

visible without Fire, nor solid without Earth, *Plato* says God at first created Earth and Fire. In which one may discern some Vestiges of those words in *Genesis*, *In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth*. For by the Heavens here most Interpreters understand the Empyrean Heaven, and not the Firmament.

In *Timeus*,
Tom. 3.

It was very difficult, or rather impossible that two things so contrary should be long united. Therefore God contriv'd a way to hold them together by a *Medium*, which partaking of the Nature of them both, should make one *Whole* of them together with it self. But if one *Medium* is sufficient to join plain Points and Numbers, two are necessary to join solid Numbers. For Example; the Numbers Six and Twenty four, which are alike plain Numbers, may be united by one sole *Medium*, which is Twelve; that is to say Twelve is the proportional Number or *Mean* between Six and Twenty four; in like manner between Nine and Sixteen, the proportional Number is Twelve.

The Numbers Eighteen and Fifty four are alike solid Numbers, which cannot be united by one *Medium*; that is, one cannot find one sole proportional Number or *Mean* to 'em: So that there's need of two; as Twenty four and Thirty six; for Fifty four is to Thirty six as Thirty six is to Twenty four, and as Twenty four is to Eighteen.

'Tis the same with plain and solid Dimensions. If the World could have been plain, one *Medium* would have been sufficient for it; but being round, it has need of two to unite it. And 'tis for this reason that *Plato* says God put Air and Water between Fire and Earth; for the same proportion that is between Water and Earth is between Air and Fire; this Proportional Bond, is the Divine Bond that renders the World so solid, that it can never have an end but only by the Will of him who is the Author of it; on the contrary, the Alteration and Age of its Parts, serve to support and renew it.

But

But though the World in this State was solid, yet it still wanted perfection, for no Body is perfect without Intelligence. Therefore God, who design'd the Universe should be as perfect as it could be, gave it a Spirit, which *Plato* calls the Soul of the World, which governs in it, and preserves Harmony in it, maugre the discord of the Elements. He says this Soul was created before the World; and perhaps he imagin'd this from a misconstruction of those words in *Genesis*. *And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* 'Tis true, he also calls this Soul proportion, and Symmetry; which might induce one to suppose that he means nothing else by it, but the just Temperament of the Elements themselves: But the definition he gives of the Soul, will not suffer his words to be taken in this sense; for he says 'tis a Substance that participates of the indivisible Substance, a Composition of *the same* and *the other*; that is, of the first Matter, and the Universal Spirit; and hereby he would shew that Matter was a *Medium* that contained an Immortal, Immaterial, and consequently Indivisible Spirit; and an Animal and Corporeal Spirit; just like our Bodies which are compos'd of three things, of *the same*, of *the other*, and of *Substance*, which he explains by very obscure Examples taken from Numbers, and Musick. And herein *Plato's* Error consisted, namely in giving the World a Soul like ours, and still more perfect. Therefore he calls the World God, but a *God that is created and dissoluble*. So that he was so far however from confounding Nature with God himself, that he has thoroughly distinguished them, for he calls God alone *the efficient Cause, or Power*; and he calls Nature *the Consequent, which obeys the first Cause for the creation of Beings*; And subjects it entirely to the Government of that first Cause. *Plato* did not content himself in giving the World a Soul, he also gives one to the Heavens and to the Stars. And perhaps this false Idea of his, was occasion'd by his misunderstanding

In his Phil.
leeb. Tom. 3.

Chap. 45.
12.

Thus Time
and Motion
had a begin-
ning.

In his Ti-
meus, Tom.
3.

understanding of some Passages of the Prophets, for instance, that which God says in *Isaiah*. *I have commanded all the Host of the Heavens*. Or it may be, this Language of *Plato's* is only Poetical; and being *Homer's* Scholar and Rival, he was willing to animate every thing like his Master, who inspires Life into the most insensible Beings, insomuch that he gives a Soul to a Spear. And the Holy Prophets sometimes speak after the same manner.

All the Pagan Philosophers before *Plato*, had taught that Motion, and consequently that Time was Eternal; and it was on this Principle that *Democritus* founded his Arguments when he maintain'd that all could not be created, and thence infer'd the Eternity of the World, *Plato* was the first who by a Beam of Truth, discover'd through this thick Darknes, that Time and Motion had a beginning as well as the Universe. For it being impossible that Matter should be of It self, as one must be forc'd to acknowledge, neither is it any more possible for Motion either to exist of it self, or to be a Quality affix'd to Matter, which then would never rest. Motion therefore must proceed from without, and was imprinted on Matter by the same Spirit that created it. *Plato* was so deeply sensible of this Truth, that he made use of it to dissipate the Errors of that senseless Philosophy which had reign'd to his Time: Now he says, when God had created the World, and communicated to it the Motion that was most suitable; *He was extremely pleased to see his Work move, live, and almost resemble the Immortal Gods themselves*. (And for this reason *Plato* calls it God.) *And he would have render'd it more conformable to his eternal Idea, but that it was impossible to communicate Eternity to a created Being, therefore he took this expedient to create as it were a moving Image of Eternity, And in disposing the Heavens he made this Image of Eternity, which is permanent in Being only; This Image which goes on by Numbers, that is to say, Time, which did not sub-*
sist

first before the Creation of the World. Time not being capable of subsisting but with Motion, whereas Eternity subsists alone by it self, without being either Old or Young; and 'tis only of this that one can properly say *it is*; the Terms of past, present, and future, cannot agree to it, because they are fluid parts of Time, whose property it is to be always just producing, but never existing.

We don't perceive (continues he) that we very unfitly attribute to the Eternal Being these parts of Time, and the Terms IT WAS and IT SHALL BE, for we say of this true Being, It was, is, and is to come. But we ought always to say, It is; for this only agrees to it according to true Reason. It was, and it shall be ought never to be said but of that which is produced in Time: These are but Motions, that which always is, and is always the same, without any Change, can't be called either Old or Young at any time, nor receive any of the Modes which Birth or Production affixes to things that are moveable, and the Objects of Sense; these are the parts of Time which imitates Eternity, and proceeds by Number and Measure, &c. so that Time was created with the Heavens, that as they were produc'd together, so they might end together, if ever they come to be dissolved.

The improper Language Men use about the eternal Being.

This Truth is confirm'd by the Writings of the Saints, who teach that Time and Motion had a beginning, and must have an end. The Beauty of this Discovery, and the Strength of this proof, which may be called a Demonstration, did not hinder *Aristotle* from contradicting his Master in this point, and from maintaining his Error by the following Argument, which has nothing of Solidity in it. *If it be altogether impossible (says he) that there is, or can be imagin'd a Time without a present Instant; and if it be true, as it cannot be denied, that the present Instant is a sort of Medium which has a beginning and end, a beginning of the Future, and an end of the Past, Time must necessarily be from all*

Aristotle's very subtle and false way of Arguing, in the 1st Chap. of his Physics.

Eternity,

Eternity, because the most remote Time one can take, is in some present Instant; for in Time one can only take the present Instant: so that seeing the present Instant is a beginning and end, Time must needs have been from all Eternity; no person being able to assign a Time which has not been preceded by Time, and so ad infinitum. And if Time is eternal, Motion must be so too, since Time is only a Passion of Motion.

Eternity admits of neither Time nor Motion.

This is the Language of a Philosopher, so blind that he could not conceive that the World was created, and that before the Creation there was neither Time nor Motion, but Eternity, in which nothing ran from the present to the past, but all was present and stable: God alone being before Time, in whom there is no successive Course either of Time or Motion.

What Plato's Ideas were.

Before we pursue this Matter we must explain what *Plato* means, when he says God created the World according to that Eternal Pattern which he had conceived in himself. As an able Workman has in his Head the whole disposition and form of his Work before he begins it; so that he works according to his Idea after such a manner that what he performs is (if I may so say) only the Copy of that Original which he has imagined; the whole Work that subsists being a mere Imitation: After the like manner, God in creating the World only executed that eternal Idea he had conceived of it; for the World and all that it contains existed intelligibly in God, before it existed really in Nature. This is the meaning of *Plato's* Ideas which the Pythagoreans and he had taken out of the History of the Hebrews; where we see God gives *Moses* the Models of all those Works he would have him make: But it ought to be remember'd that these Ideas are universal and not particular; that is they comprehend the Species, as *Man*, and not the Individuals, as *Alexander*: And it must farther be minded that they are not a Being separate from God, but are in God. This is the

The Origin of those Ideas.

Im-

Immaterial and Eternal Original upon which every thing was made, and indeed is nothing but the Divine Knowledg, the first Cause of all created Beings; for those Ideas are in God his Notions, which are eternal and perfect of themselves, and as *Alcinous* says, *Idea with reference to God is the Eternal Intelligence, and with respect to us, it is the first Intelligible; in reference to Matter it is Measure, in reference to the Universe 'tis the Exemplar, and in respect to it self it is Essence.* If *Aristotle* had rightly understood this Doctrine, he would not have oppos'd it, nor have given so rash a decision as he has done, affirming that to establish these Ideas as the Exemplars of sensible things, is *to speak to no purpose, and to amuse ones self in imagining Poetick Metaphors.* *Eusebius* was better acquainted with the excellency of it, for he says in expresse Terms, that this Doctrine which teaches that there is an Intelligence which has taken all things from Incorporeal Ideas, which are their Patterns, was conceived by *Plato* with a great deal of Reason, and by very just and necessary Consequences.

Aristotle conceived those Ideas as Essences separate from God.

In Prepar. Evang. lib. 3. cap. 6.

When God was pleas'd to create Time, he created the Sun and Moon, whose Course is the measure of Days, Nights, Months, Years and Seasons, and gave motion to the other Celestial Spheres. He afterward proceeded to the creation of Animals, without which the World could not be perfect; and of these he was pleas'd to make as many Species as the World had parts; that is, Celestial, Aerial, Aquatile, and Terrestrial.

And God created the Demons (or Angels) those Inferiour Intelligences, to whom he gave order to create three other sorts of Animals, because if he had created 'em himself they would have been Immortal; for all that proceeds immediately from God, must necessarily be Immortal in its Nature: So that these Intelligences created Man, that is they form'd the Humane Body, God having reserved to himself the right of giving it a Soul, which he made

The Creation of Angels.

of

of the same Nature with that of the World, only he made it less perfect. For (says he) it was not just that Man who was but a part of the Universe should be more perfect than the Universe it self, or so perfect. These were *Plato's* Thoughts on the creation of Man, and 'tis not difficult to know the Source of this Opinion, in which there is such a Mixture of Truth and Error; for it springs from a misinterpretation of the Words of *Moses*. After God had created the Heavens, the Earth, the Stars, and the Celestial Intelligences, that is, the Angels, he says, *Let us make Man after our own Image*. Upon this the Egyptians, and Pythagoreans not understanding the Mystery hid under the Plural Number, thought God spoke to the Intelligences he had created, and said to them, *Let us now make Man after our Image; you in forming that part of him which must be mortal, and I in creating that which shall be of an immortal Nature*.

The Air
fill'd with
good and evil
Angels.
In his 10th
Book of
Laws,
Tom. 2.

He maintains as a most certain Truth, that as there is an infinite number of Good Angels in the Heavens (that is in the Air) so there is also a multitude of Evil Ones, that seek nothing else but how to do mischief to Mankind. *Seeing we are agreed* (says he) *that the * Air is fill'd with good and bad Genii, which are entirely opposite to each other, † this occasions an Immortal Combate, and requires a continual Attention on our part: The Gods and the Good Angels are ready to help us, for we are their Possession*.

Plato adds that God at once created the Souls of all Mankind, who were to live in all Ages of the

* *Eusebius* amaz'd and surpriz'd at the Beauty of this Passage, shews that *Plato* could not have it but out of the Book of *Job*, who many Ages before him relates that the Devil appear'd before God with the Good Angels.

† A very surprizing Truth to be found in the Writings of a Pagan, and the same which is admirably explain'd by *St. Paul*, when he says, *Eph. 6. 12. For we wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darknes of this World, against Spiritual Wickedness in high Places*.

World,

The Life of Plato.

III

World, and that he distributed them into all the Celestial Spheres, teaching them the Nature of all things, and giving them his Eternal Laws which he calls *Destiny*, and to which he also gives the name of *Necessity*, and sometimes that of *Fortune*; not that any thing is fortuitous, but only to denote, that this *Destiny* brings to pass an infinite Number of things, which are unforeseen by us, and which are commonly imputed to Chance, altho their Cause is designed and fixed. The Poets understood this, when they call'd *Destiny*, *that which has been once said*. In which they seem to have had some knowledge of what *David* says in the 65th *Psalms*. *God hath spoken once*, that is to say, he has spoken with an immutable Word; for *Destiny* is nothing but that Law which flows from the Will of God.

Destiny why call'd Necessity and Fortune.

Quod semel dictum est. Horat.

What Destiny is.

From this Creation of Souls before their Bodies, *Plato* draws his Opinion of *Reminiscence*. For if the Soul existed before the Body, it must have had in it all Notions, and by consequence all that we learn through the Course of our Life, is only the remembrance of what we had forgotten. For to learn is nothing else but to recover the knowledge we had before we came into the World, and which the Passions of the Body made us forget.

Reminiscence.

However *Plato* in his *Menon* seems not to be entirely convinc'd of the truth of this Opinion of *Reminiscence*; but to perceive that it might be reasonably objected, that God actually illuminates the Soul, and that by the Light he communicates to it he renders it capable of Seeing and Learning that which it never saw, or knew before. And this in all Appearance is the reason, that he does not establish it as an absolute Certainty, but only makes use of it to shew that we ought not to despair of Learning that of which we are ignorant.

From the Union of the Body and Soul result the Passions and Sensations. When the Soul is Mistress, she leads a Life of Temperance and Justice, and when she leaves the Body, she returns to the Star to which

The Passions and Sensations.

which she was formerly assigned ; but when she becomes a Slave, and plunges her self into all sorts of Corruption ; she suffers a Punishment tenfold more than all her Pollutions and Impurities, and after a thousand years has the Liberty to chuse what kind of Life she likes best : if she still chuses to live irregularly, she goes to animate Beasts, that is, she becomes from day to day more and more vile and vitious, which continues till at last she comes to acknowledge the Empire of Reason ; and follows this Guide which is given to her ; and so by purging her self from all the Filth of the Elements, returns to her first State.

*The Origin
of false Opinions,
Errors, Knowledge
and wisdom.*

Moreover from the same Source *Plato* draws the Origin of the false Opinions, Errors, and all the Follies of Men, as also of their Knowledge and Wisdom. When the Soul is as it were delug'd by the Torrent of Matter, it can no longer distinguish Truth ; and is like a Man going with his head down, and his heels up, to whom all Objects are inverted.

When she moderates the Course of this Torrent, so that what is *the same* is neither surmounted nor obscur'd by the Mists of what he calls *the other* : then she sees all things as they are ; and being fortified by Study and Experience penetrates their Causes, and by those means arrives at true Knowledge, and perfect Health, as much as 'tis possible in this Life.

Plato afterwards descends to the Consideration of all the parts of a humane Body, to shew with what exactness they answer the design of Providence. And the Description he makes of it is so fine, that *Longinus* calls it divine.

*Plato not
much skill'd
in Anatomy.*

The Excellency of this Description does not consist in the truth of his *Anatomick Discoveries* : for on the contrary *Plato* seems to have been less skill'd in *Anatomy* than his Predecessors ; but it consists in the Elegancy of his Expressions, in the just Relation he finds between all the parts of the Body of Man ; and in the Reasons he gives of their different use

One

One of the great Faults of which he has been reproach'd, was, for having said, that Drink passes through the Lungs. *Plutarch* has made an express Treatise to justify him in this by the Authority of the Poets and that of Physicians. That of the Poets is too weak: for when a Poet speaks of *watering the Lungs* for *drinking*, he conforms himself to the vulgar Opinion and Language: And that of Physicians is not strong enough to make an Error pass for Truth. But indeed *Plutarch* is mistaken when he affirms this to have been the Sentiment of *Plato*, and of *Hippocrates* too; for neither one nor t'other ever fell into this Error. On the contrary *Hippocrates* says, that Drink does not pass through the Lungs, but goes into the Stomach, and thence runs into the Bowels; He only asserts that a small insensible part of it slides into the *Aspera Arteria*, only to help to cool the Air which goes into the Lungs; and this likewise is what *Plato* means; nor could he have any other Thought, seeing he often in the same Treatise teaches, that the Stomach is made to receive all that we eat and drink; and that the natural Heat after it has mix'd, dissolv'd and divided the Meat and Drink, sends the Liquor into the Veins, which carry it to the Heart, and from thence into all the Body by the Pipes that proceed from that part. And the distribution of this Liquor of the Chyle which passes from the Stomach into the Veins he calls *Irrigation*. So that 'tis but a small insensible part of what we drink that goes into the Lungs; as *Hippocrates* and after him *Galen* have justified by Experience.

Plato afterwards treats of the wonderful things to be observ'd in the Sight and Hearing, which are the most perfect Senses. And in explaining the admirable Construction of the Eyes, he discovers the Causes of Waking and Sleep, and descends even to that of Dreams which may be said to be Material. For he says they that are in a deep Sleep have either no Dreams, or very short ones; because all their

Plato justified.

The wonderful things that belong to the Sight and Hearing, and the use of both.

Senses are at rest : but they who are but half asleep, if one may so speak, do not fail of having Dreams; because their Senses being still in motion, preserve the Vestiges of those things that have mov'd 'em, and imprint 'em on the Imagination.

*The true use
of the Eyes.*

Tom. 3.

He says that the Eyes first taught us Philosophy, which is the greatest favour Men can receive from the hand of God : and he is so well perswaded that they are given us only for this end ; that he makes no difficulty of affirming, that if a Man, who does not use 'em to this purpose, becomes blind, he has no reason to complain, because his Eyes having been always useless to him, he has no loss in losing 'em. *In truth (says he) God has form'd our Eyes, only to contemplate the Works of his Providence, and to see the regular Motion of the Heavens which so constantly obey the Spirit that guides 'em, that so we might accustom our selves to love that which is Comely and Regular : and that we might learn to regulate all the Motions of our Souls, which are of the same Nature with that Divine Intelligence, but are disorder'd by our Passions.*

*The true use
of the Voice
and of the
Hearing.*

Tom. 3.

He says the same of the Voice and of the Hearing; that the Tongue and the Ears are given us particularly that we might declare and hear the Wonders to be remark'd in the Works of God ; and that Musick was invented only to furnish us, if we may so say, with Rule and Harmony. For because it has a wonderful relation to all the Motions of our Souls, he says, *Wise Men make use of it, not as 'tis now us'd for foolish nay pernicious Mirth ; but to calm and moderate the Passions, and to correct the horrible Disorders which they occasion.*

*The formation
of the
Heart and
its use.*

Tom. 3.

He says the Heart is the Source of the Veins, and the Fountain of the Blood which runs from thence with a rapid Course into all the other parts; and that it is as it were in a Fort guarded on all Sides ; that so when the Choler comes to be inflam'd, when Reason gives it notice that it is threaten'd with some Mischief from without by external Causes, or from within

within by the Disorder or Tumult of the Passions ; it may speedily warn the whole Body of what passes, and dispose it to obey its Orders, to prevent the Danger impending. *And because God knew that the unexpected sight of any terrible thing, and the motion of the Choler would make the Heart beat violently, he contriv'd a very useful Remedy for this sort of Inflammation ; and put the Lungs under it, the substance of which being soft and not furnish'd with much Blood, and having little holes within it like a Sponge, serves as a Pillow to the Heart, incessantly refreshes it with the Air and Moisture which it attracts, and moderates that violent Heat which would otherwise consume it.*

In the lower Ventricle where the Nourishment is made, are the Spleen and Liver ; the Spleen is a hollow and soft Substance, and consequently very proper to perform those Functions which it has pleas'd God to assign it. For he thought fit, that it should be (not the Kitchen, as 'tis express'd in a corrupt Copy, but) *the Sponge to wipe and cleanse the Intestines ; and to take off all the Filth which gathers about the Liver in time of Sicknes ; and this swells and puffs it up ; as it on the contrary flags, and returns to its former state when the Body is cleans'd.*

The Functions of the Spleen and Liver.
Tom. 3.

Some have falsly read μαγεγειον a Kitchen for ενυαγειον, a Sponge.

As for the Liver he says it was destined to a use which deserves to be related for its singularity : He tells us that because God knew that when the Spirit was busy in distributing the Aliment in this lower part of the Belly, it would be but little concern'd in what pass'd in the upper Region, and in the Seat of Reason, whose Orders it would never hear ; he to provide against this Inconvenience, made the Liver of a hard Substance, having a mixture of Sweetness and Bitterness ; and of a smooth and even Superficies like a Looking-Glass. When the Soul would advertise this Animal Spirit of what passes, she by means of the Thoughts, imprints on this Superficies the Image of all things of which she would give it Information ; and by these Images gives it either

Tom. 3.

In his Timæ-
us. Tom. 3.

Joy or Sorrow. When the Soul does not act upon this part, but leaves it at rest, as during the time of Sleep, those Gods who form'd the Body, or the great God himself imprints on this smooth Superficies the Images of such things as must come to pass, and these Images being carried to the Imagination produce Divination or Prophecy, the Seat of which the Ancients for this reason plac'd in the Liver; but *This (says he) never happens unless it be when that part of the Soul is not in a condition to obey the Spirit, which ought to guide it; for God has joined Prophecy with Madness; and 'tis easy to convince any one of this Truth, who considers that no person prophesies truly but when he is out of his Senses, that is when God, or Sleep, or some Disease deprive him of the use of Reason; and because 'tis only by Reason that Men can judge, of things, therefore Prophets never * understand what they see; and we are therefore obliged to have recourse to Interpreters, who not being transported with Passion are capable of explaining what the Prophets have seen, by Reasonings founded on Experience.* But all this Construction of the Liver looks more like one of Pythagoras his Enigmas, than a Physical Explication; and seems much less proper to prove that prophecy comes from God, than to discover that it is the effect of some Vapours of the lower Ventricle which darken and stain the Imagination.

Why the
Bowels
wind about.
Tom. 3.

He endeavours to shew that God knowing Man would be intemperate in Eating and Drinking, and that nothing would be more capable of destroying him before he advanc'd to ripeness of Age, he made as it were a Labyrinth of Bowels in the lower Ventricle, that by their turnings and windings the Food might be hinder'd from passing off too soon; for if

* This is one of Plato's Errors, who absurdly confounds Prophets divinely inspir'd with false Prophets; and thereby gave occasion to the Error of the *Montanists*. True Prophets did not speak by Extasy, but saw and understood what they declar'd, and were therefore call'd *Seers*.

the

the Bowels were all freight, the Food would be continually passing; and Men by this means render'd insatiable would think of nothing else but eating, which would make 'em uncapable of applying themselves to Learning and Philosophy, and would speedily occasion their Death; the natural Heat not being sufficient to digest so much Food, besides that it would want time to do it.

After this he explains the nature, and production of the Flesh, Blood, Bones, Muscles, Sinews, Brain, Marrow, and all the other parts of which our Bodies are compos'd; he calls the Blood *the Food of the Flesh*, and says the whole Body is encompass'd with Flesh, like so much soft Wool, laid close together, which serves to fortify it against the Injuries of the Air, and all other Accidents, as falls, &c.

In speaking of the Construction of the Head, he says 'tis both the most beautiful, and weakest of all the parts of the Body. That God indeed could have given Man a Head much better fortified with Bones, Sinews and Flesh, which would have extremely prolong'd his Life, as well as made him lead it more commodiously; but because it was not possible that a part cover'd over with a very hard Bone, a great many Sinews, and very thick Flesh, should have a very quick Sense; and the Head was to be the Seat of Sense, Reason and Prudence; God having well weigh'd the advantages of a very strong and robust but ill-contriv'd Body, that is heavy and uncapable of Sense and Prudence, against those of a Body more feeble but more elegant, that is to say, lively and lightsome, he prefer'd this to the other, and chose to give us a short rather than a long Life; for the Spirit was not created for the Body, but the Body for the Spirit.

The Construction of the Head.
Tom. 3.

He goes on to speak of Sanguification, Nutrition, Respiration, Transpiration, natural Heat, the diminution, and augmentation of the Body, which leads him to speak of Old Age, Diseases and Death, which happens, *when the Machine is worn out, and the*

Strings that hold it together grow slack, and give the Soul liberty to fly out of her Prison with extreme Pleasure.

Tom. 3.

As for Diseases he explains the Causes of them by the same Principles which *Hippocrates* had establish'd before him. For he says Man being a Compound of the four Elements, Fire, Air, Earth, and Water, or which is the same thing, Cold, Hot, Moist, and Dry; the just Proportion and even Temperament of these 4 Qualities preserve Union and Peace, from whence Health results; and on the contrary their unequal mixture which proceeds from Excess, Defect, or the Change of the Situation of some or other of 'em, produces Disorder and Division, the only source of Diseases. For then that which was Cold becomes Hot, that which was Dry, Moist; and that which was Heavy Light, and the Blood being corrupted by this Alteration, as well as the Spirits, and overcharg'd with Acid, or Salt Particles, instead of producing New to nourish the Flesh, breeds nothing but Choler Flegm, and Water, which generate divers sorts of Fevers and other Distempers.

The Diseases of the Soul.

From these Diseases of the Body spring those of the Soul which *Plato* divides into two sorts, that of Folly, and that of Ignorance or Stupidity. Ignorance is properly the Soul's forgetfulness: and when great Pleasure or excessive Sorrows take away Knowledge from the Soul, so that she is not in a condition to understand any thing, this is Folly. For example, a Man whose Temper inclines him to Love, is always mad while the rage of this Passion lasts; he is therefore call'd a profligate Person, or a Debauchee, as if he willingly plung'd himself into this Disorder; But he ought to be call'd a Fool, and look'd upon as a Disease'd Person; for according to *Socrates* no Man is vicious but against his will. This Man is carried away by his Constitution, and the ill Education he has had. And the same may be said of all other sorts of Sensuality.

Sorrow

Sorrow likewise proceeds from the Intemperature of the Body, for it is caus'd by an acrimonious Flegm, and Bilious Humors which disperse themselves through the Body, and not finding vent obscure the Soul with their Vapours, disturb her motion, and bring grievous Distempers upon her, but different according to the Parts on which they fix.

The Cause of Sorrow.

To this Intemperature of the Body he joins the Intemperature of whole Cities, which by the pernicious Example of their corrupt Manners, and the wicked Discourse which they suffer both in publick and in private, and in fine by the little Care they take to have young People well educated, frequently precipitate us into all these Mischiefs. Thus our Corruption comes properly from two Causes that are absolutely involuntary; which render us wicked against our Wills; And instead of accusing us, there is reason only to accuse our Parents and Teachers.

The Moral Intemperature of Cities.

What *Plato* says of the ill Education of Yourh, and the fatal Examples which whole Cities give them, is but too True, but what he adds, that our Corruption is involuntary on our own part ought not to be taken in a strict Literal Sense. For as *Aristotle* has very well observ'd, 'tis a great Error to say we are only vicious against our Wills. Sound Philosophy and Religion teach us, that God has given Men a Liberty of chosing between Good and Evil, and that all vertuous or vicious Actions are purely voluntary. If it were not so it would be unreasonable to blame Vice or commend Vertue, nor could any reason be assigned for the Establishment of Rewards and Punishments, for none can be justly praised or dispraised only for what he did whether he would or no. How then did *Plato* understand this Notion of *Socrates*, to embrace it as he did? without doubt he understood (and 'tis what *Aristotle* did not comprehend) that God has given men all that Light that is necessary to direct 'em to obey the Law of Nature which he has engrav'd in their hearts; and to inform 'em of certain fundamental Truths, which enlighten the Universe like so many

How this Opinion of Plato, that we are wicked against our Wills, ought to be understood.

Torches ; but Men have despised these Helps ; and by this voluntary Contempt, are justly fallen into Blindness which hinders 'em from distinguishing Truth from Error, or at least from obeying it ; and thus all the vitious Actions of Men are at the same time voluntary and involuntary ; voluntary in their Origin and Source ; for 'tis their own Choice that they have thrown off the Yoke of Vertue and Righteousness ; and involuntary often in the execution ; for in spite of the Remorse of their Consciences, they are led away by the miserable propension of their Hearts, which induces 'em to commit the Evil which they would not do. They are the Slaves of Sin which rules over 'em, and to the Service of which they have engag'd their Liberty.

*Remedies
for the Dis-
eases of the
Soul.*

Plato comes next to shew the Remedies that are to be applied against these two sorts of Diseases of the Soul and Body ; and first establishes this Incontestable Maxime ; that whatsoever is Good is Beautiful ; that Goodness consists in proportion and measure ; and that if this be true in all sensible things, 'tis much more so in the Union of the Soul and Body : For from their just proportion spring Health and Vertue ; as Diseases and Vices are produc'd by the contrary : If the Soul be too strong for the Body, she weakens it, wears it out, and very often causes such Maladies as baffle the Art of Physicians.

On the other side if the Body is stronger than the Soul ; because it takes care only of it self, it grows, and fortifies it self daily, and leaves the Soul in an Oblivion, and as it were in a Lethargy, which brings on her a Stupidity and Ignorance which she cannot dissipate. Therefore to preserve the health of both parts, they both of 'em ought to be equally exercised. He that applies himself to Study ought not to despise the Exercises of the Body ; and he who makes Bodily Exercises his principal business, ought not to neglect Meditation and Study. But in these two States we must take great care not to go from one Extreme to another ; not to pass suddenly, for instance,

stance, from great Rest to great Labour. We should imitate Nature whose Motions are always equal, without Catches, and Shocks. Now of all Motions the most Salutory is that which is made of ones self in ones self; because 'tis Natural. That which comes from another Body is Detrimental; and the most mischievous of all is that which by means of External Bodies, removes by parts a Body which was at Rest.

Hence it follows, that the best Remedy, and most wholesome Purgative is Exercise, that is to say that which they call * *Gymnastick*: After this comes the Exercise of the Horse, or that of being carried any other way, as in a Litter or Boat, which the Ancients called *Vectatio*; For this Exercise is compos'd of Motion and Rest; the third sort is not good, but in pressing Necessity, and no Man of Sense will ever use it but in an Extremity; Such are Medicinal Purges: for we should never irritate those Diseases that are not dangerous, by such kind of Medicines. The formation of Diseases is like that of Animals, they require a certain space of time to bring 'em to perfection; they have their Periods; and if we attempt to oppose 'em by violent Remedies before the time of their declension, we often make many Distempers of one, or of a slight Disease an incurable one. We ought to prevent or attack them by a good Regiment, as much as opportunity will permit.

Plato divides the Soul into 3 parts; the Reasonable part, the Irascible part, and the Concupiscible part. He places the first in the Brain, the second in the Heart, and the third in the Liver; he also compares it to a Flying Chariot having two Horses and a Charioteer; one of the Horses is head-strong and unruly, and the other gentle and governable: The Charioteer is Reason, which is to Command and Guide; the Unruly Horse is the Concupiscible part; for the Appetites know no Bridle or Restraint of

The Soul divided into 3 parts.

* Such as Wrestling, Leaping, Running, &c.

Reason: and the gentle Horse is the Irascible part, because it obeys the Reason, and is serviceable to it on urgent Occasions. When a Man does not moderate these two latter parts, and purge their Passions to reduce 'em to a useful Mediocrity, and submit them to the former, he can have no other than Earthly and Mortal Opinions; and he renders himself Mortal, because he fortifies in himself those parts that are Mortal; whereas he that makes the first part reign over the two other; because he has in a special manner adorn'd and cultivated that God which was given to him, that is his Understanding or Mind; and because the Mind comes immediatly from the only true God, he is hereby united to the Source of Life, and already tastes the first fruits of Immortality.

An Expli-
cation of this
Division.

This Division of the Soul deserves to be explain'd for some have been mightily mistaken to think that Plato made the Soul dividible, or that he imagin'd there were divers Souls; as if he put as many Souls in the Body of Man, as there were Grecian Officers (if I may so speak) in the famous Trojan Horse. This Philosopher did not fall into such an Error as this; but on the contrary attacks it and exposes all the Absurdity of it, and with marvellous strength of Argument establishes the Simplicity and Indivisibility of the Soul; but his design was to show (as he explains himself in his *Theatitus* and the 4th Book of his *Republick*) that there are some things that depend only on the Soul, such are all the Acts of the Will; and that there are others which depend on the Corporeal Faculties; and these Corporeal Faculties or Powers compose those two parts, that may be call'd the two Corporeal and Mortal parts of the Soul, viz. the *Concupiscible* and *Irascible*, which cause all our Passions, and the seat of which he places in the Heart and Liver, which he looks upon as the two Sources of the Blood and Spirits, on which alone the Corporeal Faculties depend, and which alone excite all the Motions and Passions of the Body.

Thus

Thus according to *Plato* there is but one simple Soul without any diversity of parts, the seat of which is in the Brain, whence it irradiates the whole Body by means of the Nerves, Bloud and Spirits; but its Motions, that is the Acts of the Will, may be opposed by the Motions, and Impulsions of the Body; and 'tis this which makes these Combates between the Superior and Inferior Soul, (that is betwixt the Soul and the Body) mention'd in the 4th Book of the *Republick*. This I say is *Plato's* Doctrin, by which 'tis easy to explain all the Faculties of the Soul, and to give the Reasons of its Vices and Vertues, and to discover the Remedies that ought to be used to fortifie the one and weaken the other, and to correct all the Passions in reducing them to a useful Mediocrity; for there are none of 'em but what are good by Nature, and may be used to good advantage, when the Soul is Mistress of 'em, and so regulates and conducts 'em.

He next explains the Production of the first Woman, and that of Animals. Having understood by the History of *Moses*, that the first Man being cast into a deep sleep, God extracted the Woman from him; this gave rise to all those Imaginations, which he exposes in his *Timæus*; where he teaches, that the first Woman, and all Animals sprang from Man, but through that thick Darknes he has spread upon this Work of God, in explaining it after a Mysterious and Poetical manner, the Foot-steps of Ancient Truth are to be discovered; and one may perceive, that he thus obscur'd and conceal'd 'em, only that he might thence draw a Doctrin useful to regulate the Manners of Men. His design is to engage Man always to render his Creator that Worship which is due to him; and to do nothing that may render him unworthy of that great Advantage of having been form'd by the Hands of God himself; therefore he represents to him, not only that he degenerates into a Woman, when he is unjust, timorous and voluptuous, but moreover that he sinks into the Condition

The Creation of the first woman and of all Animals.

of

of Animals. For when he is Inconstant, Rash and Unsteady, and amuses himself about penetrating the Heavens by a vain Curiosity, imagining that only by the Organ of his Sight he is able to judg of all that appears there, he becomes a Bird : If he has no relish of true Philosophy ; but instead of contemplating the Heavens, that by the marvellous Workmanship of 'em, he might seek the knowledg of him that made them, he only thinks on Earthly Things, and how to gratify his sensual Desires, he degenerates into a brute Beast, and is always fix'd to the Earth ; if he be yet more corrupted, he becomes a Reptile, and always touches the Earth with all the parts of his Body ; and in fine, if he push his Folly and Ignorance to the last Extremity, he becomes a Fish, unworthy to breath in the Air ; and consequently plung'd in the most filthy and troubled Element of all. This was the Metempsychosis of which *Plato* speaks, and I make no doubt, but this was the Sentiment of *Pythagoras*, and of the Egyptians, which has been made ridiculous in taking it very unjustly in a literal Sense. For what Probability is there that Philosophers, who never spoke without Enigmas should with so much Simplicity explain so wonderful a Secret as that of the Passage of Souls into various Bodies of a different Species ? And perhaps it would be no ill-founded Opinion that this Idea came into the head of *Pythagoras*, upon what happen'd in his time to King *Nebuchadnezzar*, who for his Sins was turn'd out among the Beasts, and for seven Years grazed like an Ox.

*What gave
occasion to
the Opinion
of a Me-
tempsychosis.*

A Philosopher who explain'd his Doctrine only by Enigmatick Expressions could not but be taken with this Idea, which naturally informs us, that Vice degrades us from our Dignity, and transforms us into Beasts, more or less Savage, according as we are more or less vitious ; and a certain sign, that this was the sense of this Metempsychosis, is, that the Pythagorean Philosophers conceiv'd it just after this manner ; and pray'd that Man in his Essence is inferior

* I
evident,

inferior to God, and Angels, and superior to Animals, Plants, and other Terrestrial and Mortal Natures: and that as that Man who should flatter himself that he should become a God, or an Angel, would be infinitely mistaken, not understanding the Limits of Nature; he that should think he should become a Beast for his Wickedness, or a Plant because of his heavy and sluggish Temper, would likewise be deceived, *being ignorant of the essential Form of the Soul, which can never alter; but being and continuing always Man, is said to become a God or a Brute by Vertue or Vice, although by Nature it cannot be either the one or the other, and therefore is so only by resemblance.*

Hierocles
on the Ver-
ses of Py-
thagoras.

Moreover *Pythagoras* might take this Idea from the Ancient Hebrews, who gave Men such Names as were descriptive of their Nature, calling them Wolves, Dogs, Swine, Serpents, Fishes, &c. as they remark'd in 'em such Vices as render'd 'em very like those Animals. Therefore the first Man that was celebrated for Piety, and began to call on the Name of the Lord was call'd *Enos*, that is to say, a *True Man*; as if there had been no true Man before him, * because there was no pious Man. This is all, the Mystery of *Pythagoras* his Metempsychosis; which has been turn'd into a Monster by a low literal Explication of it. *Plato* understood it in part, but he alter'd it in connecting it with an Error into which he fell, about the Return of Souls into this Life after a certain space of time. As I take it, he conceiv'd that a Soul came divers times to animate the same Body, thus it was rather a Resurrection several times, repeated, then a Metempsychosis. But of this Matter we shall treat more largely in its place.

Some of *Plato's* Interpreters have said that in the Creation of Man, God order'd the Inferior Deities to make the Body, that so, because all Evil was to proceed from Matter, he might not be charg'd with

Whence Evil comes,
and whether
it subsists of
it self.

* I suppose the Author means in that Generation; for otherwise 'tis evident, that *Abel* was a pious Man.

it,

it, and that it might not be said, that Evil came from God himself. But this expedient would have been very useless, for if Evil were a quality adherent to Matter, God having created this, the other must needs have come from him; though the Body had been created by inferior Deities; which is impious and very remote from Plato's Thoughts. When this Philosopher says Evils could not be banish'd from Nature, and that they arose from Necessity, that is from Matter; he had no design to signify that Matter was Evil of it self; but he meant to shew, that as it is always opposite to the Nature of God, it causes all the Passions and all the Miseries of Men; who by how much the more they approach it by so much the more distant they remove from God. For Matter does not only corrupt those who immerse themselves in it, but also such as look on it; because every thing that inclines or turns it self towards it, necessarily turns away from God, and leaves Light for Darknes, which is a Principle confirm'd equally by Religion and Experience, so that 'tis unnecessary to bring Proofs to support it. It will be sufficient to cite here Plato's own words. *It is impossible my Dear Theodore, that Evils should be entirely expel'd humane Society. For 'tis necessary there should be always something opposite to Good. Yet it must not be thought that Evil can ever approach the Deity, 'tis only annex'd to mortal Natures; and is always about the Earth which we inhabit, because it springs only from Necessity. Therefore we should endeavour to fly from hence as swiftly as we can. Now to fly away is to labour to unite our selves to God, as much as possible; and we can't be united to him, but by Wisdom, Righteousness and Holiness.*

*In his Theoretus.
Tom. I.*

Evil does not spring from Matter.

In this Book of a Republick, he shews that Evil does not spring from Matter, but from Motion, which brings it to its first Confusion and Disorder. The World (says he) had all good things from its Maker, but from the External Habitude, which it had before it had all that is Evil, wicked and vicious in Nature, and

and communicates it to Animals. So that by his Account, Evil is properly only a Return to the first Disorder, an Irregularity, a Dislocation, and Disobedience, and consequently subsists not by it self; whereas Good subsists independantly of the things that possess it; for it subsists in God, who is the Author of all Good, and is Goodness it self. But whence comes this Motion that leads to Disorder? It proceeds not from Matter, seeing that is without quality. It comes according to *Plato* from the rash and disorder'd Spirit which heated and animated the first Matter, before God by framing the World, had render'd it capable of Order and Harmony by an Understanding.

By this we are to understand, that Evil is a privation of Order and Harmony, which proves true in all sorts of Evil, and above all in those of the Soul, that is in Vices which are the only proper Evils. When a man disobeys the Law, one can't say his Disobedience is a Being which exists and springs from the Law, but 'tis an Alienation from what the Law commands. The Law is Holy and the Commandment is Just and Good, but Concupiscence has produc'd Sin. When a Son loves not his Father who has done him nothing but Good, one can't say this Aversion proceeds from the Father; on the contrary, 'tis only a Refusal of Love and Submission which he owes him, and which the Law of Nature teaches him. Just so the Evils of the Soul, are not a fault of Nature; but a fault of the Will, which being free uses its liberty to reject that which is Good. So that Vices are only voluntary Aversions which alienate us from right Reason, in which alone Order, and Harmony consist; and consequently, as the Pythagoreans and Platonists knew very well there is no necessity of establishing a Principle of Evil, whether we make it spring from Matter, or derive it from without; we need only one principle of Good which truly exists, and this is God. By his Essence he is separated from Rational Substances but he

Evil does not exist of it self.

com-

What Good,
and Evil,
Vertue
and Vice
are.

In what
sense Plato
calls Crea-
tures Gods.

In his Ti-
maeus,
Tom. 3.

communicates and unites himself to them by Reason: to obey this Reason is Vertue and to disobey it, Vice. Thus our Bodies are neither the Cause of our Vices, nor that of our Vertues; * But our Souls are the Cause of both, as Plato very solidly proves in his Xth Book of Laws.

It has been charg'd on Plato as a Crime, that he gives the Name of God to Creatures: But besides that he has done nothing in this but what we find done in the Holy Scripture, where Men and Angels are called Gods; Never did any one better observe the infinite Sovereignty of the true God over mortal Creatures to whom he has given this Name, than Plato has done. Thus he feigns God speaking to 'em as their Supreme Lord. *Children of the Gods, all the Works that have gone out of my Hands are indissoluble as much as I please, and as long as I shall sustain 'em. Nat but that whatsoever has been join'd together is of a nature capable of being disunitied, but it becomes not an infinitely good Creator to destroy his Work, when this Work has nothing of evil in it. You have been created, and consequently you can't be entirely Immortal, and Indissoluble; however you shall never be destroy'd, and Death shall have no dominion over you; my Will being a stronger Bond to ascertain your Immortality, than all that wherewith you have been bound at your Birth. We have yet three sorts of Animals to form of mortal Matter, without which the World would not be perfect, for to make it perfect it ought to contain Animals of every Species; but if I should create them my self, they would be equal to the Gods. Therefore that they may be mortal, and that the World may be compleated, do you form them your selves according to your Nature, by imitating the Power I display'd in forming you: and seeing the most excellent of 'em ought to have something Divine to render 'em worthy to rule the rest, and to engage*

* Therefore the Holy Scripture commonly speaks of the Soul with reference to Vices and Verrues. *The Soul that sinneth, if a Soul touch, &c.*

† them

them to obey Laws and Justice; I will provide that Divine Seed which is the Soul. Do you finish this Composition, by adding that which is to be mortal; and by furnishing it with necessary Aliments, raise them up and make 'em grow, and when they are destroyed receive them again into your Bosom.

Plato here after a very Magnificent and Poetical manner describes how God created Man and the other Animals by means of second Causes, which he calls Gods; and it is no difficult Matter to find in his Words the Beams of those Eternal Truths which Moses teaches us. Plato (after Moses) brings God in as if speaking to other Gods when he is about to create Man; though he did not comprehend the Mystery hidden under those divine Words. In Plato as well as in the Writings of Moses we see Man was form'd after the Image of God; not as to his Body, but as to his Mind; that he was to rule over other Animals; and that he only is capable of rendering God true Worship. Plato teaches us after Moses that these very Animals serve to perfectionate the Universe; contrary to the opinion of certain Heretiques, who accused God for having made many Animals that were either dangerous or useless. In fine we see in Plato as well as in the Holy Scriptures that Important Truth * that the Immortality of the Angels is not an effect of their Nature, but a Privilege of mere Grace, which depends only on the Divine Will.

'Tis surprizing that such a Man as Plato, who understood these Great Truths, and spoke of God after so admirable a manner, as we shall see in divers places of this Treatise, should notwithstanding maintain, as he has done in the 11th Book of his *Republick*, Tom. 2. that God being perfection it self, cannot shew himself to Men under any visible Figure, and he reasons

Whether God
can make
himself visi-
ble to Men.

* This is what St. Ambrose says in express Terms in his 3d Book De Fide. *Nec & Angelus immortalis est naturaliter, cujus immortalitas est in voluntate Creatoris.* Angels themselves are not Immortal by Nature, but their Immortality depends on the Will of their Creator.

Plato's false
Reasoning.

thus ; If God should metamorphose himself he would assume a Form more perfect than his own, or a Form less perfect. Now 'tis ridiculous to say he changes for the better, for then there would be something more perfect than he, which is absurd ; and 'tis Impious to admit that he changes himself into something less perfect, for God can't degrade himself ; besides if he should appear under any other Form than his own, he would lye, because he would appear to be what he is not. Hence therefore it must be concluded that he continues in his Simple Form, which alone is Beauty and Perfection it self. And upon this he condemns *Homer* for having attributed to God those Visible Forms.

If *Plato* had only employ'd this Argument of his to beat down the ridiculous Metamorphoses which the Poets attributed to the Gods, he would have had Reason ; but to make use of it to oppose the manner by which God has often render'd himself visible, viz. Under the Form of an Angel or Man, whom he created after his Image, and whose Figure he might take, without deceiving Men, or laying aside his Perfections, is an Error. And this did not escape the knowledg of his Disciple *Aristotle*, who though otherwise less illuminated in what belongs to the Divine Nature, understood better than *Plato* the Beauty and Truth of that Sentiment of *Homer*, who in the XIVth Book of his *Odysses* says that the Gods, who can easily clothe themselves with all sorts of Forms, sometimes take the Figure of Travellers and go into Cities to be Witnesses both of the Sins of Men and of their Good Actions. Instructed by this great Poet he understood that it is not unworthy of God to assume Humane Nature, to deliver Men from their Errors. Upon which his too Zealous Admirers have advanc'd that he had some preface of the Incarnation of the Messiah. But what an Honour is it to *Homer*, that his Notions agree better with the Truths contain'd in the Holy Scriptures, than those of the Greatest Philosophers. When God appear'd to Men under a visible Form he had both what was visible and what was invisible. But

The Life of Plato.

131

But to return to *Plato's* Physicks. One may very well dissent both from those who will have 'em very perfect; and from the Sentiment of those that Account 'em very defective. The former have too good an Opinion of 'em; seduc'd perhaps by the great pleasure they have found in penetrating the great Obscurities of his *Timæus*; and others speak too meanly of 'em, because they have not given themselves time to sound those Deeps, having been discourag'd by the dryness of his Principles, which he does not give himself the trouble of unfolding; but leaves others the labour of explaining and finding out the meaning of 'em. But in this there is a Medium to be observ'd. 'Tis certain *Plato* knew the chief Principles of true Natural Philosophy. This sufficiently appears by what has been already said on this Subject. We find in his *Timæus* an explication of the Nature of the Elements, only by the Disposition and Configuration of the parts of Matter, which also cause the different Sensations and Affections of the Body. There we find the Explication of Colours, which are only the Reflexion of Light. By the different Mixture, by the diversified Figure and Motion of the Elements, each of which has many different Qualities or Forms, he explains the Production and Nature of Minerals, Metals, Oils, Salt, Liquors, Meteors, &c. For Example, speaking of the Loadstone, and Amber, he says, *Their Vertue comes from the Motion of the Matter which goes out of their Pores.* But all this together can't make a well methodiz'd System of Physicks: Nor is it his design to give the World a Treatise of Physicks: He swiftly runs through that which is transitory, to find that which is permanent, and to dwell upon it; he forgets nothing that is necessary, but rejects whatsoever is uselefs or superfluous; he so little designs to enter into a deep research of this Matter, that he lets us know, that if any one has a mind to break off his Meditation from things that truly exist and abide, to apply himself

What Judgment may be made of Plato's Physicks.

*Natural
Philosophy
consider'd
by Plato as
a Divertise-
ment.*

to a more particular knowledg of such as are only transitory and momentany, and finds pleasure in so doing, it will not be difficult for him to satisfy himself in following his Principles; *and to give himself a Divertisement of Life*, which he calls *Wise and Moderate*.

By these Words *Plato* gives us to understand that he look'd upon this part of Natural Philosophy rather as a Play, than an Employment; and this oblig'd him, to give only a superficial Account of it; that he might more usefully employ his Time in searching for more important and Solid Truths. And one may say, that in this again he imitates *Moses*, who in the History of the Creation has wisely suppress'd whatsoever might flatter the Vanity and Curiosity of Men, to insist only on that which was proper to augment their Humility and Piety. Therefore we should be so far from wondering that Natural Philosophy was not rais'd to its perfection in those Ancient Times when it was look'd upon at best but as an Amusement more curious than useful, and when the greatest Men applied themselves only to Morality which is concern'd only about our true Happiness and Misery; that I know not whether we should not have more reason to be surpriz'd that it should be so much esteem'd in Ages wherein we ought even to make less account of it than *Plato* does. *Solomon* does not advise Men to acquire Natural Philosophy but to get Wisdom. For 'tis Wisdom only that teaches us to know God; and this is *Plato's* Language, who to promote his Design always reasons morally in his Physical Discourses: and instead of insinuating on the Consideration of Mechanique Reasons taken from the Motion, and Succession of Bodies, applies himself, as *Socrates* did before him, to discover the first Cause, and to penetrate the Designs of the Sovereign Spirit which governs the World; and endeavours to explain whole Nature by Harmony and Proportion; Seeking not so much to teach Men Physicks, as to give 'em great Prospects, and to
elevate

elevate their Minds. Nay *Socrates* formally says in *Phædon* that the manner of teaching *Phyſicks* by the Succession and Motion of Bodies is very defective, and causes more Errors than it cures; because by detaining the Mind too much upon Matter, and that which is but a Second Cause, it hinders it from raising it self up to God, who is the only true and first Cause of all things; and he blames *Anaxagoras*, who tho he knew this Truth, dissembles it in his practise, and deceives the expectation of his Readers. 'Tis such a Research as this that *Solomon* represents as a very Evil and Dangerous Employment and the Truth of this has been but too much confirm'd by Experience.

Before we quit this Subject, let us see how he ranges the Celestial Spheres, and what Vertues he supposes them to display by their Influences. First he places the Earth as the Center of the World. 'Tis true *Theophrastus* writes, that in his Old Age he repented that he had given it that place, which is not suitable to it. He says it is the Boundary of the Rising and Setting of the Sun, and consequently the Instrument of Time, as the Planets are, and Guardian or Mother of the Day and Night. After the Earth he places the Sphere of the Moon, then that of the Sun, that of *Venus* and that of *Mercury*; after *Mercury* he places *Mars*, *Jupiter* and *Saturn*.

The Order of the Celestial Spheres.

He says that in the beginning after God had created the Souls of Men, he distributed them into all the Planets; by which he would signifie, that the Bodies which those Souls animated in the time mark'd out by Providence, should be subject to the Influences of those Stars. Which he explains more sensibly when he feigns that there are Three *Parcæ* the Daughters of Necessity, which turn a great Spindle, that is the Axle-tree of the World, with its Eight Spheres, whose Motions and Revolutions produce all things. Necessity is Destiny, which is nothing but the Order and Concatenation of Causes, which ought to produce such or such Effects. This Necessity has 3 Daughters

The Influences of the Stars.

An Explication of the three Parcæ.

ters which denote the three differences of Time which is either Past, Present or Future. The first which is the Eldest is nam'd *Lachesis* that is, a *Lot*, because the Lots of all things have been regulated from all Eternity, that is before Time. The second is *Clotho*, This is she that executes, and adds the present to the past. And the third is *Atropos* which signifies that the future is no less certain or invariable than the two others; but is the Consequence of one and the same Law which never alters. These *Parce* are cloth'd in white, and seated on Thrones with Crowns on their Heads, to signify on one hand their Purity and Innocence, and on the other the Dominion they exercise over all that is subjected to 'em; they are plac'd at equal distances over these Eight Spheres, upon each of which there is a *Siren* which Sings with all her might, and the *Parce* answer this Singing after such a manner, that all these different Voices make but one Harmony. *Plato* would hereby signify that all things obey the Divine Law and concur to produce those Effects, which are Consequences of the Causes God has established.

*The Soul is
not subject
to Destiny.*

But if our Bodies depend on these Planets and obey the Laws of this fatal Necessity, our Souls may preserve themselves independant, and only obey God, who is Master of Necessity it self. The Planets may by their Influence produce in us such or such Manners, and by these such or such Actions or Passions; but if our Souls will, they have power to moderate and regulate 'em. And when the Soul does the contrary, and suffers her self to be carried down the Stream; she deprives her self of her own Liberty, and loses all her Privileges. For this is that in which that Free will, that God has left her to denote her Origin, consists: She can either submit her self to that Fatal Necessity which *Zoroaster* calls an *Augmenting the power of Destiny*; or subject that to her self, by uniting her self to him, to whom all things are subject, and in whom alone she can enjoy her Liberty; And this is what *Plato* means, when

he

he says a Prophet having taken the Lots out of the Lap of the first *Parça*, ascended a Throne, and addressing himself to all the Souls that had been created, spoke to 'em in these Terms. *Hear what Lachesis the Daughter of Necessity says. O Mortal Souls, here is the beginning of a New Period, or Life, You are going to animate Bodies that are destin'd to Death; Your Demon (or Angel) shall not make choice of you, but you shall choose your Demon (or Angel) your selves. Let that Soul therefore that has the first Lot, first choose the kind of Life which she will lead by the Laws of Necessity, and so of the rest. There is nothing but only Vertue that does not acknowledge her Laws: she is free, and gives not her self to any but such as know how to honour her: Thus the fault is in the Soul which chooses, and God is not to be blamed.* After this Proclamation, all imaginable ways of living are propos'd, and the Soul choofes.

In the X
Book of his
Repub.
Tom. 2.

We cannot finish this Matter without speaking somewhat of these Demons, assign'd as Guides to each Soul; and this Article would indeed require a long Chapter of it self, or rather an entire Volume, if we would found the bottom of this Doctrine; but 'tis sufficient for us here to know in general, that when *Plato* says the Soul immediately after her animating the Body, choofes her Demon or Genius; his design is only to signify the Liberty of the Soul, and that she is able to choose between Good and Evil. That is, that as we are compos'd of 2 different Natures, by one of which we partake of this gross and Terrestrial World, and by the other of the Intelligible World; by which we are rais'd to that which is most Sublime and Spiritual; If the Soul immerfes her self in Matter, she has a material Demon, that hinders her from raising her self up to Celestial Things; and if on the contrary she keeps her self pure, and lives only by the Understanding, she has a good Demon, or perfect Genius, which supports and hinders her from descending to that which is

How the
choice of a
Demon or
Genius
ought to be
understood.

material and corruptible; if she changes her Life, she also changes her Demon; and after Death, the Demon that she chose, leads her either to her Reward or Punishment. This was *Plato's* Doctrine, which he frequently delivers in Allegories very difficult to be understood, but by which he seems to have known, or at least had some Glances of very great Truths concerning the Nature and Difference of those Spirits, which are between God and Men, Truths which the Christian Religion has consecrated without divesting them of their Obscurity. For who is it that understands those different Orders of Spirits which *St. Paul* describes by those different Names, of Powers, Thrones, Principalities, and Might? *St. Augustine* confesses he does not understand 'em, and *St. Ireneus* assures us that they cannot be understood. It is probable *Plato* had received almost the same Ideas from the Theology of the Hebrews, which we shall speak of in the Argument of *Socrates* his Apology; and it was without doubt out of respect to their Books, that he advanc'd that excellent Maxim, that in those matters we ought to receive nothing for Truth, but what is found conformable to the Word of God, and the Divine Oracles.

A seeming
Contradi-
ction in
Plato.

None ever prov'd the Immortality of the Soul better than *Plato*. His Proofs of it are to be seen in his *Phædrus*, in the X Book of his *Republick* and in his *Phædon*. In the mean time I can't choose but speak here of a seeming Contradiction which is found in his Writings. In *Phædrus* he says in express Terms, *That the Soul is eternal, and that it can't perish, because it was not begotten*: And on the contrary he says in *Timæus*, *That the Soul was created before the Body, and that it was begotten by the best of intellectual and eternal Causes; as it is also the best of all things that are generated and temporal*.

Plutarch
endeavours
to reconcile
this Contra-
diction.

Plutarch to reconcile this Contradiction, into which he is sure *Plato* never fell, assures us that by this unbegotten and eternal Soul he understands that

void

void and disorderly Spirit which mov'd all things irregularly before the Constitution of the World; and on the contrary that he calls that the begotten Soul which God compos'd of that first Spirit and of the permanent and eternal Substance; of which he made a wise and regular Soul, because he put something of his own into it, and added Understanding to Sense, and Order and Harmony to Motion.

But at this rate the Soul would be a Compound of a foolish thing and a wise, which is the grossest of all Errors. It would likewise be a Composition of two things equally Eternal, which by their Union would constitute one entire begotten Substance, which is a Contradiction. In fine this void and precipitant Spirit which animated the first Matter is not Eternal in Plato's Opinion, for he makes it a Creature, and calls it Eternal only in reference to Time, the Birth of which it preceded. Therefore to reconcile these two different Ideas which he gives of the Soul, I suppose when he calls it begotten he has regard simply to the Essence of it, which began to exist by the Will of God; and when he calls it Eternal, 'tis with respect to the Principle of it which is God, who communicates to it all its Qualities, and in whom it is properly Eternal.

The Errors of Plutarch.

The way of reconciling these two Ideas.

Plato not only proves the Immortality of the Soul, but also knew all the Consequences of it, as the Resurrection, and Final Judgment, when all Good Men shall be rewarded and the Wicked punished. Nay he penetrated so far into these Divine Truths, that his Expressions are entirely conformable to those of the Holy Prophets, and even to those of the Evangelists and Apostles. For he expressly observes that at the time of this Judgment *good Men shall be at the right hand of God, and the Wicked at the left, from whence they shall be thrown down into the Abyss and into outward Darkness, bound hand and foot, where they shall be tormented, and torn by Spirits, which he calls Fire, and where nothing shall be heard but horrible Groaning and Howling.*

The Consequences of Immortality known to Plato.

In the X Book of his Republic. Tom. 2.

He

That the dead know what passes in this Life; For he says in express terms, *that Souls after they are separated from their Bodies here in this World. have still some power by which they take care of humane Affairs.* This Truth is prov'd by a long train

In the XI Book of Laws Tom. 2. of Reasons. We ought therefore to believe these so certain and Ancient Traditions: and to credit the Testimony of those Legislators who have transmitted them to us. Unless we will reproach them as so many Fools. And in another place he says, Hence I

Tom. 3.

conclude, that the Dead retain some knowledge of what passes here below. Good Men have some sentiment before hand of this Matter; and the Wicked deny it: But the Presages of divine Men are more certain than those of such Miserable Wretches as are always immers'd in Vice.

The Source of these Traditions.

Plato received all these Ideas from the Traditions of the Egyptians, who had 'em from the People of God, and the Ancient Patriarchs. But in process of Time, these Traditions were so corrupted by those Idolaters, and mix'd with so many Errors, that 'tis not to be wonder'd at that Plato has explain'd one and the same Truth by Descriptions so different and fabulous as those of his *Phædon*, his *Gorgias*, and the last Book of his *Republick*.

The Divinity of the Son of God known to Plato.

Tom. 2.

Those who have carefully read the writings of this Philosopher, discover yet more surprising Truths in 'em; for they find that he believ'd the Divinity of the Son of God, which he has explain'd by Enigmas, that those Sublime Truths might not be expos'd to the Raillery of the Profane.

In his *Epinomis*, after he had spoken of the Honour due to the Sun and other Planets, as they were the wonderful Works of God on which he had printed the Character of his Omnipotence, and which in performing their Revolutions in the Time prescrib'd to 'em, contribute to the perfection of the Universe by this Obedience of theirs: He adds, *The most Divine WORD fram'd this Universe and render'd it visible.* And that Man that is truly happy, first admires

mires this WORD, and is afterward inflam'd with a desire of learning all that can be known by a mortal Nature, being convinc'd that this is the only way, to lead a happy Life here below, and after Death to arrive at those places that are prepar'd for Vertue; where he shall be truly initiated and united with Wisdom; and always enjoy the most wonderful Discoveries. Here Plato very exquisitely maintains that the knowledg of the WORD leads to all sublime Discoveries. For none knows the Father but by the Son. And 'tis only by him that we can attain a Life of Bliss.

In the Letter he wrote to Hermias, Erastus, and Coriscus to exhort 'em to live in Peace, he says. Letter VI.
Tom. 3. You must read my Letter all three together; and that you may profit by it, you ought to implore the Assistance of God the Sovereign Lord of all things that either are or shall be; and the Father of this Sovereign, who is the Cause of Beings. If we are truly Philosophers we shall know this God as clearly as Blessed Men are capable of knowing him.

Does not Plato in this manifestly follow the Opinion of the Hebrews? For whence could he receive this knowledg of God, the Father, and the Lord; of God the cause of Beings; but from their Writings, who taught him to give the Son the name of Lord, of which none of the Greeks before him had ever heard, or had the least Idea? Euseb.
præpar.
Evang.
XI. 16.

Nor is it only pretended, that he had some knowledg of the Word, the Eternal Son of God, but some farther maintain, that he had some discovery of the Holy Spirit; and so had a certain Idea of the most Holy Trinity: For thus he writes to young Dionysius, I must declare to Archdemus, that which is much more precious and divine; and which you have a very ardent desire to know; since you sent expressly to me on that Account. For as far as I understand by him you don't believe I have sufficiently explain'd what I think of the Nature of the first Principle; I must write of this to you in Enigmas, that if my Letter Plato had
some Idea of
the Holy
Trinity.

Letter II.
Tom. 3.

ter should be intercepted by Sea or Land, he that reads it may not be able to comprehend any thing. All things are round about their King; they exist by him, and he alone is the cause of good things: Second for second things, and third for third.

Book VI of
his Repub.
Tom. 2.

In his *Epinomis*, and elsewhere, he establishes for Principles, the first Good, the Word, or Understanding or Soul. The first Good is God; and when he calls God, Goodness, or the first Good, he had an Idea of this Truth, that Good is nothing but the Nature of God, and his Infinite Goodness. This Good he explains in Terms very well worth the reading. *As the Sun* (says he) *gives to visible things, not only the faculty of being seen, but also, their Birth, Nourishment and Growth, just so this Good, not only makes intelligible things knowable, but also gives 'em being, although that is not Essence, but some other thing that infinitely surpasses Essence by its Power and Majesty.*

The Word or Understanding is the Son of the first Good, who hath begotten him like himself. And the Soul which is the Term between the Father and the Son, is the Holy Spirit.

St. Justin,
St. Augustin,
St. Jerom,
St. Cyril,
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Theodor-
et, St. Cle-
ment, &c.

I don't know whether without having recourse to these great Truths, we could by *Plato's* Philosophy explain these Passages which seem so strange, so as to give 'em another sense that should be natural, and agreeable to his Principles. I must say, I very much doubt it. Nay, I am perswaded it would be very great Temerity, or rather Impiety, to interpret 'em after any other manner after the Decision of so many Fathers of the Church and Ecclesiastick Writers. For they tell us in expresse Terms, that *Plato* had this knowledg of the Father and the Son, and of him that proceeds from them both, namely the Holy Spirit.

Origen is not content to assure us of the same thing, but accuses *Celsus* for having purposely overlooked the Passage of the 6th Letter, because Jesus Christ is plainly spoken of in it. Which proves, that the Christians were not the only Persons who

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found these great Myſteries in *Plato's* Writings; but that the Enemies of Chriſtianity found 'em there as well as they, and were uneaſy at the ſight of 'em.

Let us not by our Darkneſs caſt a ſhade over thoſe Rays of Light which proceed from the Fountain of Light it ſelf; but let us acknowledge that *Plato* not only knew all that Natural Reaſon could diſcover concerning God to a Philoſopher; but was illuminated by ſupernatural Reaſon too. Having been inſtructed in the Books of the Hebrews, in thoſe of the Prophets, and in the Traditions of the Egyptians, he became favourably diſpos'd to receive the Seeds of theſe Eternal Truths; and was aſſiſted by Grace, for *St. Auguſtin* aſſerts, that Jeſus Chriſt revealed 'em to him. That which is deplorable is that he has corrupted 'em by his Reasonings. For he ſpeaks of the Three Perſons of the Deity as of Three Gods, and Three different Principles. Thus while the ſupreme Reaſon enlighten'd him on one ſide, Philoſophy ſeduc'd him on the other: The common unhappineſs of thoſe who merely by Humane Reaſon go about to explain the Myſteries of God, which are not to be known but from himſelf, and from thoſe he has truly inſpir'd.

That *Plato* had a particular knowledg of the Sacred Writings appears by many Paſſages in his Works, and by his Errors themſelves; for the greateſt part of his moſt erroneous Opinions proceed in ſome ſort from that Source of Light which dazzled him, and on which he has ſpread ſo much Darkneſs. This ſeveral have obſerved before now. That of the Creation of Souls before Bodies ſeems to have had no other Foundation than that Paſſage of *Jeremiah*, where God ſays to this Holy Prophet. *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee*, This Philoſopher not underſtanding that God calls things that are not as if they were; and that he knows not only all that is, but alſo all that ſhall ever be, built on this Text that Error of his, that Souls exiſted before Bodies.

How Plato has corrupted the Truths with which he was illuminated by God.

Jer. i. 5.

From the ſame Divine Writings he extracted all the

The Life of Plato.

the great Truths which he teaches, as when he says the *Name* of God is *he that is* for there's none but God that truly is. This Name of God, as St. *Augustin* observes, is not found in any profane Book more ancient than *Plato*; and this Philosopher could not have it from any other Books than those of *Moses*.

Who is it that does not discern the stile of the Prophets in that place of *Phædon*; where he describes a pure Earth which is above this of ours in Heaven, and in comparison of which this we inhabit is no better than Dirt? In this every thing is corrupt, and we are encompass'd with Darkness; or if we see any Light, 'tis through great Clouds, and very thick Mists: whereas in the other, the true Light is to be seen; and every thing in it is admirable. All things there shine with the glittering Lustre of Gold, Jaspers, Saphirs, and Emeralds; and those that inhabit it enjoy a long Life which is not cross'd with any incommodious Accident. The Ancients who discover'd the Truth hid under these Images, shew that they were extracted out of the Books of the holy Prophets, who call Heaven the City of God, and the Land of the Righteous; and prove, that the Names of these precious Stones are taken from the 54th Chapter of *Isaiah*, where God promises to lay the Foundation of his Church with Saphirs, and Jaspers.

So the
LXXII ren-
der it.

Book I.
Chap. 5^a

I should be too prolix if I should here relate all that *Plato* has drawn from this Fountain. 'Tis sufficient to know, that what we find in him of this kind, is so considerable, that it ought to render his Writings very precious to us; and that of all the Works of the Pagans, there is none more useful, or that can be more serviceable to establish eternal Truths, to raise the Soul to the solid Contemplation of the divine Essence, and to manifest the Beauties of the sacred Scriptures. And 'tis on these Accounts that he merited that great Encomium, given him by *Proclus*. *Truth* (says he) *is spread through all*

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all Plato's Dialogues, more obscurely in some, and more clearly in others. We find in 'em every where grave, sensible, supernatural thoughts of the first Philosophy, which carry those up to the pure immaterial Essence of God, who are in some sort in a condition, to participate of it. And as he who has created every thing in the World by his power, has in every part of this Universe plac'd Images of the Gods, which are so many Proofs of their Existence, that all things in the World might turn towards the Deity, because of the Union, and if I may so say, natural Relation that is between them; so the Mind of Plato being fill'd with the Deity, has dispersed his Thoughts of God through all his Works. He would not suffer any single Tract to be destitute of this Character, and without any thing spoken of God; that such as are truly inflam'd with the Love of Divine things might receive some knowledg of the supreme Being from all his Writings, and so might have a Just Idea of every thing which cannot be known but in God who is Truth it self.

Having spoken of Natural Philosophy and Morality let us pass to the third part which is *Dialectick*. The Ancients write, that Plato perfected Philosophy, by adding this part to Physicks and Ethicks: But by this they only mean he brought *Dialectick*, which is true Logick to its perfection. Indeed Plato's Logick is more natural, more exact, and more solid than that which was in use before him, and than that the Rules of which have been publish'd after him. For he teaches more by examples, than Precepts: He always chooses Subjects that are familiar and useful to Morality; and treats 'em not as a Doctor, and as they do in the Schools, by Methodical Discourses and studied Syllogisms, but like a Man of Conversation by free Discourses, which properly make the Character of *Dialectick*. Therefore Plato preserv'd Socrates his method of Dialogue being fully convinc'd that Sciences ought to be taught by Word of Mouth, and not by Writing, because Men
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are better persuaded by the Tongue than the Pen; because the Answers, and Objections of the Learner, not only shew what progress Truth makes in his Mind; but besides give an occasion of clearing up many Difficulties that lie in his way, and which can't all be foreseen in Writing. *Plato* teaches better than any Man how to speak with justness, to answer precisely to what is asked, to lay down the State of a Question exactly, and lead on the Argument directly. He shews perfectly well how to make accurate Divisions, to define well, and to examine Definitions aright, that none may be suffer'd to escape that are not true.

At what
Age *Plato*
would have
Men study
Dialectick.

He not only brought this Science to perfection but also regulated the study of it; for to avoid the unhappy Inconveniences that befall those who apply themselves to it too Young, and who commonly make use of it rather to contradict than to investigate Truth, he would have none apply themselves to it, till they were above thirty Years of Age, and then would have 'em employ five Years in it, being persuaded that on this alone depends all the Progress a Man is capable of making in the Sciences, and in the perfect knowledg of true and solid Good. And indeed, *Dialectick* being the Art of Reasoning, 'tis not only the Foundation of all the Sciences, but the only Guide that can conduct Men to true Happiness, by making 'em distinguish Truth from Error. And for this same Reason, near six hundred Years before *Plato*, the Holy Spirit exhorted Men to learn *Dialectick*, when he signifies by the Mouth of *Solomon*, that all Science without Examination and Proof serves only to deceive Men. And also that the knowledg of a Fool, is but a Discourse in the Air without Examination and Proof. And for the same Reason *St. Paul* says, a Bishop ought to hold fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort, and to convince Gainsayers, who by their false Principles subvert whole Houses, teaching things which they ought not. And this

TIT. I. 9. and
II.

this is the work of Dialectick. For 'tis properly a Habitude, a Science which teaches to define what every thing is, in what it differs from another thing, or in what it resembles it; to search it out where it is, to know what makes the Essence of it, how many true Beings there are; what those things are which are not; and in what they differ from those that are: It treats of the true Good, and of that which is not so, it shews us how many things enter into the first Good, and how many are rank'd under its contrary; and leads us to distinguish that which is Eternal, from that which is but Temporal and Transitory; and this not by Reasonings founded on Opinion, but by Proofs drawn from Science. For it hinders the Mind from wandering after sensible things, and thereby fixes it on that which is intelligible, and by dissipating all sorts of Errors by its Light, feeds it as it were in the field of Truth. *Plotinus* says very well, that this is the most estimable part of Philosophy; and is not to be considered as the Instrument of a Philosopher, but as that which is essential to him. For it does not stop at simple Propositions and Rules, but passes on to things, and has all Beings for its Matter and Object; and by the Truth that is in it discerns Error which is always a Stranger to it.

The Definition of Dialectick.

If the Writings of the Ancient Hebrews assisted *Plato* in laying the Foundations of good Ethicks and Physicks, they have not been less serviceable to him in establishing the Principles of good Logick. These Principles consist in a right Imposition of Names, which ought to denote the Nature of things. For when the Nature of any thing is known 'tis easy to reason justly, and to establish the Truth. No Nation ever follow'd better Rules in this than the Hebrews, as appears by the Books of *Moses*, and the Writings of the Prophets. And therefore *Plato* confesses that the Greeks borrow'd the greatest part of the Names of things from the Barbarians (that is from the Hebrews) and acknowledges that this right

Plato took the Principles of true Dialectick from the Hebrews.

Imposition of Names proceeds from a more Divine Nature than that of Man.

The Character of a good Dialectician

Plato says, that Man will never be a good Dialectician, who is not in a condition (they are his own Words) *to Give and Receive Reason*. He means that to be a Dialectician a Man ought to be able, not only to know the Truth, but to make it known to others, and persuade 'em to embrace it. And for this Reason there are indeed two parts of Dialectick, namely Logick and Rhetorick. By the first we know, and by the second we persuade.

The true use of Logick and Rhetorick.

Since Logick and Rhetorick are the 2 parts of Dialectick, 'tis easy to see they ought only to be employ'd for Justice and Truth. If us'd to support Error 'tis no longer Rhetorick nor Logick; as a Rule is no longer a Rule when it is bent to make an ill use of it. For a crooked Rule can no longer judge, either of it self, or that which is straight. Logick and Rhetorick teach us truly to reason and discourse for and against. Not that two Contraries can be equally true; But this is to put us in a condition of answering those who would abuse 'em in favour of Injustice. None doubts that the sole Object of Logick is Truth: And this is no less true of Rhetorick: And *Plato* very well says that a *Wise Man will never labour to render himself Dextrous to please Man, but to please the Gods*. For (he adds) *Prudence requires that we should rather seek the favour of our Masters, than of those who are only our Companions in the service we owe them*.

In his Phædrus, Tom. 3

Never did any one exceed *Plato* in shewing the use of true Rhetorick, of which he gives admirable Precepts: To shew the difference between this and its Counterfeit, he compares the first to the Medicinal Art, and the other to skill in Cookery. The Physician seeks only such things as may conduce to the Health of the Body, Health being the thing he designs to procure: but the Cook is concern'd only for what may please the Taste, without troubling his Head, whether 'tis healthful or hurtful. In like man-

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ner the true Orator, he says, seeks only to make those to whom he speaks better, and the counterfeit Orator has no other design than that of perswading 'em, whatever damage they suffer by it.

The difference between the true and counterfeit Orator.

'Tis objected to him that a Man ought to make use of his Eloquence at any rate to acquire Reputation and Authority in his Country; and to bring it into subjection to him, if possible; to advance his Friends, to bring down his Enemies; and in fine (when great Calamities happen) to secure himself or others from danger; *Plato* answers all these Objections after an admirable manner, and by Principles that cannot be contested.

First he makes it appear that those who have the greatest Authority in their Countrey are the most unhappy, if they have not acquir'd it by just Means, and do not employ it to just Purposes.

He shews that Tyrants are so far from being Happy, and from having dominion over others, that they are very Miserable, and so many vile Slaves; who never do what they desire, even then when they do what they please.

He proves that 'tis much better to suffer Wrong than to do it; and that when a Man has once done it, 'tis much happier for him to be punish'd for it, than to escape the Penalty he has deserv'd.

As for what respects a Man's saving himself or securing others from great Danger; he shews 'tis not so considerable a thing as to deserve so much of our Esteem; for there are a great many things which often conduce to save Life, which yet are very inconsiderable in themselves. For Example (he says) the Art of Swimming is a thing very little esteem'd, and yet on many Occasions it preserves a Man from certain Death. The Art of a Pilot saves whole Families, and the whole Estates of divers Persons; yet a Pilot is not ordinarily much puff'd up on the account of this advantage; he does not think himself a very Considerable Man in a State, but contents himself with a moderate

In Gorgias, Tom. 1.

Salary, [as 'tis reasonable he should, because he does not know whether he has done those whom he has preserv'd any great service, for besides that he returns 'em just such as he found 'em; It often happens that it might have been better for some of 'em to have perish'd in their Voyage.

The like may be said of the Art of Engineers, that of Carpenters, Brick-layers, Coachmen and many others; who often preserve the Lives of abundance of People; and yet there is no Government wherein the Laws allot, any very great Honors, or establish any very considerable Rewards for those that exercise 'em: So true is it that notwithstanding the love Men naturally bear to Life, it must be confess'd that the Art of preserving our selves or others is no such wonderful thing, as to be prefer'd to every thing besides. The only Art which merits our Esteem, and which alone can make a Man considered as a God, is that of saving Souls; and to save 'em, they must be purg'd from their Vices: for 'tis the greatest unhappiness in the World for a Man to pass into the other Life with his Soul loaded with Sins. Therefore a Good Man ought to employ all his Logick and Eloquence both to make himself better, and to render others so; and to put both himself and others in a Condition to appear before that Judg from whom nothing can be hid, who viewing Souls quite naked discovers the least scars that are left on 'em by Perjury, Injustice, Vanity, Lying, Cruelty, Debauchery, and all other Sins; and who, as he renders to every Man according to his Works, punishes those for a time, who have committed only such Sins as are curable, that is which may be expiated, and condemns those to Eternal Torments who have been guilty of Mortal Sins; and by pushing their Wickedness to extremity have render'd themselves incurable, and have no sound part in 'em. This is the Danger from which 'tis so noble a thing to secure Men. This is the best Combate in the World, and the only

*What that
Art is which
alone merits
our Esteem.*

only one that deserves to be undertaken even with the peril of one's Life: for is it fit we should fear Men who can do no more than kill the Body?

Those Legislators, Orators and Ministers of State who have not employ'd their Eloquence to meliorate the People that were subject to 'em, were not true Orators, and consequently were not truly righteous. This *Plato* proves by the Examples of *Pericles*, *Simon*, *Milciades* and *Themistocles*; who were so far from making the Athenians good Men that they render'd them yet more brutish and savage; and in fine, bore the Punishment of that little care they took of 'em. For all that befel 'em from the hands of the People, came on 'em through their own fault; like that which happens to an ill Groom, who suffers his Horses to become more unlucky than when they were first committed to his keeping, and so at last is kick'd by 'em, and can no longer rule 'em. This is the Idea *Plato* had of Rhetorick, of which he gives excellent Precepts in his *Phedrus*, and *Gorgias*, Dialogues which can never be sufficiently commended, and which furnish us with the Maxims of which we have been discoursing.

When I say Rhetorick is one part of Dialectick, I don't forget that this is sometimes oppos'd to the other; as we find in *Plato's* own Writings in the beginning of *Gorgias*, where *Socrates* says to *Polus*, that he exercis'd himself more in that which is call'd Rhetorick, than in Dialectick. But 'tis easy to see that *Socrates* there, by Rhetorick, means that Art which has no regard to Truth, but aims only at a plausible Appearance of Truth; and the Scope of which is only to adorn and embellish any Subject. When *Isocrates* makes a Panegyrick on *Helena*, he only employs the figures of Rhetorick; and never troubles himself about the Proofs and Arguments of Dialectick. In a Word, an Orator is one who labours to excite or appease the Passions, and to obtain his end seeks magnificent Words, and spe-

cious Figures, and employs false Arguments as if they were true; and the Dialectician applies himself to Art, only to prove the Truth; as the Sophist has recourse to Art only to put off Falshood.

We now come to the manner in which *Plato* handles the Subjects of which he treats; and shall endeavour to discover the Beauties and Defects of his Stile.

After what manner Plato handles the Subjects of which he treats.

He is accus'd of never proposing his Questions simply and clearly, and of casting by this means a great deal of obscurity on his Dialogues. But to judge whether this Reproach is well or ill founded 'tis necessary to examine what belongs to Method. There are two sorts of Method; The first may be call'd simple and dry; such is that of Geometricians who endeavour only to propose the naked Truths, and to draw just Conclusions from their Propositions. This Method is very good, and extremely useful, when we have to do with Minds that are rational and free from all sorts of Prejudice: But is worth nothing when we deal with People prepossessed or unattentive, impatient or obstinate.

The Second Method which may be call'd *compounded* or *stirrid* is that of Orators; 'tis properly the first Method extended and disguised by all the Ornaments that can render Arguments agreeable, and takes away that rudeness and dryness from Precepts, which commonly hinder the reception of 'em. If we examine *Plato's* works with reference to the first of these: 'Tis certain he does not at first dash distinctly propose the Question on which he treats. But instead of being reproached he ought to be commended for this: For he purposely rejected this Method to follow the other which is infinitely more useful, and has more of Art in it. By this means he cures a great many Passions, and destroys an infinite number of Prejudices, before they to whom he speaks, know what he aims at; and 'tis by this Course he convinces them with so much strength

strength of all the Truths he has a mind to teach.

But say some, to what purpose serve those great *Plato's Preambles* which he sets at the head of his Dialogues? These are necessary to accompany his Design; and as *Plutarch* says when he speaks of the Dialogue which *Plato* made of the Atlantick Island on *Solons* Memoirs; *These are Superb gates and magnificent Courts with which he purposely embellishes his great Edifices; that nothing may be wanting to their Beauty, and that all may be equally splendid.* He acts like a great Prince who when he builds a fine Pallace, *adorns the Porch with Golden Pillars* to use the words of *Pindar*. For 'tis proper that what is first seen should be splendid and magnificent; and should promise all that greatness which is to be seen afterwards.

If *Plato's* Preambles should be excus'd for the sake of their great Beauty, and for the genuine and admirable descriptions with which they abound; yet how can any one excuse the frequent Digressions in which he engages himself? This is what is said by those who never had the Patience to read *Plato*; or else have read him very carelessly. 'Tis true there are frequent Digressions in his Dialogues; but these Digressions never carry him entirely from his Subject; for he always employs them either to establish some great Truth which he shall have occasion for in the sequel of his discourse; or to prevent the Readers mind with Authorities and Examples, or in fine to divert, and refresh him after a painful and serious research; and in this *Plato* may be said to be the Greatest Inchanter that ever was in the World, for when he is giving you the proofs of the most necessary and solid Truths; he takes care at the same time to lead you into the sweet Meadows, Groves and Vallies which the Muses frequent.

Besides 'tis an incontestable Maxime that the Operations of the Mind are not like the Motions of an Arrow. An Arrow does not go well, unless it flee straight forward; but the Mind makes no less pro-

gress when it turns aside, or stops at a Subject, to consider it well on every side, and by the different relations it has to other things, than when it goes on directly to its end. 'Tis for an Arrow to go, without turning, to the Mark we aim at; and it always misses its stroke, how little soever it diverts from it. But the Mind of Man is not oblig'd to proceed so directly; but is often engag'd to consider such Objects as are nearly allied to that it desires to know; and to take a turn about them to examine 'em on all sides. This Circular Motion is no less streight than that of an Arrow; and these turnings and windings instead of leading us from the end, conduct us to it. This is so true that when we have been thinking *Plato* was wandering from his design by frequent Digressions; we are strangely surprized to see, that that which seem'd to carry him from it does indeed after a wonderful manner lead him to it; and that the Truths he has explain'd in different places being laid together, form and compleat his Demonstrations, which would have been neither certain nor right, if he had approach'd 'em by a direct Line.

[The Abbot
Fleury in
his Treatise
of Studies.

He must never have read *Plato*, who accuses him of being ignorant of the Method of Geometricians. He knew it perfectly well, and designedly forbears the use of it. A Learned Man, who is very well acquainted with *Plato*, has observ'd before me, that no Man can more accurately propose the State of a Question, more exactly divide a Subject, and examine Definitions more nicely than he. He never forgets any of the things on which he has propos'd to treat; He always returns to his Subject, the sight of which he has never lost, what Digression soever he makes. He often marks out the beginning and end of each part, and of every Digression by Propositions and Conclusions; he often uses Recapitulations; and when he keeps his proof at a distance, he always takes care to make you remember the State of the Question: So that his Discourse has at once the liberty

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berty of Conversation, and the accuracy of the most Methodical Treatise. An Ancient Philosopher has given this Commendation to *Plato*; that of all the Philosophers he is the most excellent and admirable for dividing and defining: which qualities denote him to be a very expert Logician.

Alcin.
Ch. VI.

As for his *Stile* 'tis sublime without being Impetuous and Rapid. 'Tis a great River the depth of which makes it smooth. The principal Cause of that Elevation which reigns in it, is that he imitates *Homer*, more than any other Writers; and has drawn from his Poesy as from a living Spring that which has furnish'd an infinite Number of Rivulets which he has made to run from it: Nay he is *Homer's* Rival; and indeed seems to have heap'd up so many magnificent things in his Treatises of Philosophy, and to have fallen so often upon Poetical Matters, and Expressions, only to dispute the Prize with this great Poet with all his might, like a new Wrestler who enters the Lists against one that has already receiv'd all the Acclamations, and is the Admiration of all Mankind. This is the Judgment which *Longinus* makes of him; but since he goes not deep enough into the true Character of *Plato*, and understood but a part of it; That it may be better known, I hope I shall be permitted to explain it a little more thoroughly, by adhering to what our Ancient Masters have said of it.

Plato's
Stile.

There are so many different manners of composing, that indeed they are innumerable. For one may say, the Countenances of Men are not more different than their ways of Writing. 'Tis with this Art as 'tis with that of Painting, the Professors of which make very different Mixtures with the same Colours, and Paint the same Subjects after a very different Manner. But though those differences are so very numerous, when they are examined nicely and by detail, yet they may be reduc'd to three principal ones; which go under borrow'd Names, for want of proper ones. The First is austere or rude Composition.

Dionysius
Halicarn.
in his Treatise of Composition.

The

The Second is florid, or smooth. And the Third intermediate, which is compos'd of the other Two.

Austere or rude Composition, Dionys. pag. 22, &c. Austere or rough Composition resembles those Ancient Buildings, the Stones of which are neither polished, nor artificially plac'd; but yet are well fix'd; and have more Solidity than Beauty; it has more of Nature than Art in it; and depends more on the Passion than Manners and Civility: It has nothing florid, 'tis great and rigid, if I may be permitted to use such a Term; 'tis without Ornament; and all the Graces of it favour much of Antiquity. This is the true Character of *Pindar*, *Eschylus* and *Thucydides*.

Smooth or florid Composition, P. 25. and 26. The Second, which is smooth and florid, is almost entirely opposite to the other, It seeks the sweetest and smoothest Words; and avoids such as are harsh and rough with all imaginable care. This favours more of Art than Nature, and depends more on polite Manners than on the Passion. This is the Character of *Hesiod*, *Sappho*, *Anacreon*, *Simonides*, and *Euripides* among the Poets, and of *Isocrates* among the Orators. For of all that have written in Prose none ever succeeded better than this Last.

Mix'd Composition made up of the 2 former, pag. 27. The Third is made up of both together 'tis compounded of what is best in the two former; and therefore excels them both; for the perfection of Arts always consists in a Medium, as well as that of Manners and Actions, and the whole Course of Life.

The Writers of this kind differ more among themselves than those that have follow'd the two former methods, because of the different mixture they have made of those two Characters; for some have fallen more on the rough way, and others more on the florid,

Homer, *Sophocles*, *Herodotus*, *Demosthenes*, *Plato* and *Aristotle* wrote in this last kind; but without contradiction *Homer* is the most to be admired. There is no part of his Poems but is wonderfully diversified by these 2 sorts of Composition. They who have follow'd him

him are more or less excellent ; according as they more or less approach this great Model. And as *Plato* comes nearer to him than others, 'tis this that gives him his greatest Beauty.

The Foundation of these Three ways, as well as of all others is First the choice of Words ; Secondly the regular placing of 'em, from which there results a different Harmony, and in fine the use of Figures, and all the other Ornaments of Discourse. *The Foundation of these 3 ways.*

The choice of Words is first in Order, but the regular Disposition of 'em is first in Beauty. This is so true, that the best chosen and noblest Words if thrown at a venture, without Method and Art, will quite spoil the Elegancy of the Thought ; whereas the worst chosen and most vulgar Words will make an indifferent Thought pass, when Art has taken care to put them in good Order ; To be thoroughly convinc'd of this Truth, a Man need only pick out some of the finest Passages to be found in the Orators and Poets, and alter the Order and Harmony of 'em without making any Alteration in the Words : and he'll destroy the Beauty and Force of 'em ; for by this means the Figures, Colours, Passions and polite Manners that appear in 'em will be lost. Hence it is that the Beauties which shine in the Writings of these great Men can't be discern'd but by those that know all these differences. *Dionysius Halicarnassens* with a great deal of reason compares the disposition of Words to *Homer's Minerva* ; for as this Goddess by touching *Ulysses* with her Ring made him appear one while little, deform'd, and like a Beggar depress'd with Misery and Age ; and another while very great and marvellously beautiful ; so the different placing of the same Words make the Thoughts appear one while poor and low, and another while rich and sublime. *The Choice of Words and the regular placing of 'em.*

Plato may be call'd Divine for this part, and if he were as happy in the choice of Words, as in the Disposition of 'em he would equal *Homer*, and exceed all other Writers ; but he sometimes fails in his choice, *Dionys. Halicarn. gives Examples of it in his Treatise of Composition, P. 4. and 5. Plato term'd Divine for the disposition of words, and less happy in the choice of 'em.*

choice, when he quits his ordinary Stile, to fall upon extraordinary and sublime Expressions. While he keeps in a simple and natural way, nothing has more gracefulness, purity and smoothness than his Diction. 'Tis like the Chrystal Stream of a clear River. He then uses the most common Terms, he only studies Accuracy and Perspicuity, and contains all foreign Ornaments; he only preserves a little Air of Antiquity, which is almost insensible, and serves to set off his Elegancy, and by Numbers varied with wonderful Art; he every where spreads a charming Harmony. But when he would exceed himself, and affects to be great, the quite contrary sometimes befalls him; for besides that his Diction is less agreeable, less pure, and more embarrass'd; he falls into Circumlocutions, which being scatter'd up and down without choice and without measure, have no Elegancy or Beauty; and only make a vain show of a luxuriant richness of Language: Instead of words that are proper, and of common use, he seeks only for such as are novel, foreign and antique; and instead of employing only such Figures as are wise and grave, and easily understood; he is excessive in his Epithets, hard in his Metaphors, and extravagant in his Allegories. When I say this I don't pretend that this always happens to him; one must be either blind or stupid, not to be touch'd with an infinite number of Passages, in which he is as great and sublime as possible, and his Stile rises up to the Character of Wonderful. But I speak this to shew that when he falls, 'tis only in that kind of Stile, in which 'tis impossible for a Man always to support himself equally. For the great and magnificent way is slippery and dangerous; and he that will attain it must expose himself to Falls. And indeed none but a great Genius is capable of this noble Effort; and the Falls Men have had signify that they were led by a kind of Divine Ardour, which they could not govern. Therefore the sublime Method though it has very little Foundation al-

ways

ways carries the Prize from the middle way, though it be never so happy and perfect.

It must moreover be said to the praise of *Plato*, that the places wherein he may be said to fall are very few in comparison of those in which he has succeeded to a wonder; and if we take notice of 'em, 'tis not so much to censure them, as to admire that a Man rais'd so high above the ordinary pitch of humane Nature; should not be able to preserve himself from Faults in those places where he might so easily have avoided them; and where he seems to have known 'em. For he sometimes confesses that what he says is not so much like a wise and orderly Discourse, as a Dithyrambick Poem; and that he speaks like a Man possess'd. This extravagant Enthusiasm is vicious; especially in Matters of Philosophy; and he ought to have corrected it, seeing he discern'd it; and was so careful and jealous of his Stile, that at fourscore Years of Age, he did not cease to give new touches once and again to his Dialogues, and took so much pains with 'em, that after his Death, the beginning of his Books of a *Republick* was found on his Writing-Tables, alter'd twenty several ways.

But it may be said this Fault pleas'd him, or that, because he fear'd the Simplicity of *Socrates* would not be always relish'd, he had a mind to raise it by the Sublimity of *Thucydides* and *Gorgias*, however in imitating their Vertues, he did not take sufficient precaution against their Vices. This is the Judgment which *Dionysius Halicarnassens* makes of him in his Treatise of the Ancient Orators; and he supports it in the Answer which he makes to the great *Pompey* who took *Plato's* part. In this Answer he proves to him the Truth of this Censure, and makes it appear, that he is of the same mind himself; and farther shows, that the Ancients, as *Demetrius Phalereus*, and some others, had pass'd the same Judgment before him.

Longinus, who is so fine, so sure, and so exact a Critick

Critick was of the same Opinion some Ages before *Dionysius Halicarnassens*. He acknowledges as well as this Latter that *Plato* writes after a divine manner in abundance of places, and at the same time, proves, like him too, by palpable Instances, that he is sometimes too figurative in his expressions; and that by a certain fury of discourse he suffers himself to be transported to harsh and extravagant Metaphors, and to a vain allegorical Pomp, which can't choose but frequently languish. This is a defect which he might have avoided, as *Demetrius* says, if he had used proper Terms more frequently than Metaphors.

But to finish this Character in few words, by resuming what has been already said. In General there is nothing more harmonious and touching than *Plato's* Diction; he joins the force of the greatest Orators, with the Graces of the greatest Poets; he is very fruitful and luxuriant: he so perfectly describes Manners and Passions, and forms Characters so well, that all the Persons he brings in every where appear what they seem'd to be at first view. There is nothing more perfect when he keeps himself within the Bounds of ordinary Language; but he sometimes falls when he strives to soar very high, tho his Falls are not common, and yet the places wherein he shows himself pompous and magnificent are very frequent; so that even in this kind of writing there are a thousand things to be admir'd in his Books where there is one to condemn'd.

Having spoken of *Plato's* Stile, we come to speak a word or two of his Commentators, and Interpreters.

We have but two Latin Translations of this Philosopher's Works, that of *Marsilius Ficinus*, and that of *John de Serres*, who compos'd the History of *France* under the Title of an Inventory (or Register.) Neither of 'em will ever make *Plato* to be well understood. However the former seems to me the best for the literal Sense, and 'tis certain, that it has fewer faults.

faults. *Marsilius Ficinus* was a Learned and Laborious Man; but being too speculative and abstracted, he loses all the advantage of his Translation by his Explication, in which he strains Allegories and Mysteries to an exorbitant degree. It would have been a great uneasiness to him to understand any thing simply, tho *Plato* often speaks with great Simplicity; and by this means he endeavours to justify a great many Errors into which *Plato* fell; for he every where finds a sense, not only commodious and excusable, but orthodox; he always looks on him with a profound respect as a Man inspir'd of God; and is perswaded there is no Mystery in the Christian Religion, but he knew it: I don't say in the Writings of the Prophets only, but in those of the Evangelists and Apostles.

John de Serres was a Man of less Ability than *Marsilius Ficinus*, nor did he understand Greek near so well as he, so that his Translation abounds with Faults, and essential Faults too, which corrupt the Sense: but he is yet more to blame for entirely changing the order of the Dialogues, and disposing 'em into different Classes; not according to the Subjects, but the Titles of 'em, which are commonly false; which makes the Reader, when he seeks for that in the Dialogue which is promised in the Title, and does not find it, accuse *Plato* of being very defective in his Proofs, and of wandering from his Subject; so that he has not the Patience to hear him. The only thing in his Work, that seems to me worthy of any great Commendation, is his small Marginal Notes; in which he gives a naked discovery of *Plato's* Method; for tho *Plato* was willing to conceal it, to render his Dialogues the more diverting; it was fit some Person should give himself the trouble of unfolding this Art thoroughly, which the Readers would not always unravel of themselves: This is a very great help, and indeed is very useful to make the Beauties of the Method *Plato* follow'd appear to good advantage.

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See the Abbot Fleury's Treatise of Studies, pag. 297.

In fine, if *Marsilius Ficinus* errs in running every where too far into Mysteries; *John de Serres* runs into the contrary Fault, in taking things too simply: for 'tis by this means he charges a great many very innocent things, and which may receive a good sense to *Plato's* Account, as so many Crimes.

The Com-
mentators of
Plato.

Plato explains his Thoughts so clearly himself; that a Man needs nothing but Attention, not to lose the train of his Reasoning. The Obscurities we find in 'em result either from the Customs of his Time, or the Opinions of the Ancient Philosophers; into which Commentators give very little Light. The knowledg of 'em ought to be sought in the reading of Ancient Authors, which are more useful to make a Man understand *Plato*, than all that have labour'd to explain his Doctrine. These Commentators however are not to be slighted, but deserve to be read for their own sake, without any regard to *Plato's* Philosophy. At least there are five of 'em, of which I may make this Account: *Maximus Tyrius* under the Emperour *Marcus Aurelius*, in the second Century: *Plotinus* in the third, *Porphyrus* the Scholar of *Plotinus*, and *Iamblichus* the Scholar of *Porphyrus* in the fourth, and *Proclus* in the sixth.

The last was a very great Philosopher, and so skillful in the Mechanicks, that he equal'd, and even surpass'd *Archimedes* himself in divers things: But his Vanity was yet more remarkable than his Ingenuity; when to encourage the Emperour *Anastasius*, to whom it had been predicted, that he should be kill'd with a Clap of Thunder, he built a Tower for him that was to be Proof against the Artillery of Heaven: for this Tower prov'd useles; and the Emperour was kill'd with Thunder which he was so desirous to escape. We have moreover six Books of this *Proclus* on *Plato's* Theology, and Theological Institutions. His Words are very difficult to be understood, because he is very abstracted. But when a Man can penetrate 'em, he'll find 'em very profound, and full of admirable things. As when

he

he explains what *Plato* says, that that which unites us to God is Love, Truth, and Faith; and shows Faith to be the only cause of Initiation. For (says he) *this Initiation is made neither by knowledg nor discerning, but by a Medium which is single, and stronger than all Knowledges, that is, by the silence which Faith inspires in raising up our Souls to God, and plunging them into that Sea, which can never be comprehended.* But he must be read with a great deal of Judgment and precaution; for these things that are so admirable are mix'd with a great many Errors, into which he was thrown by that hatred with which he was always animated against the Christians.

Iamblichus is considerable in that he perfectly well explains the Opinions of the Egyptians, and Chaldeans about divine things. Besides in explaining these Mysteries he often gives great Discoveries that may be usefully employ'd to elucidate abundance of Difficulties in the holy Scriptures; and is full of Maxims that may be of great use. The greatest fault of *Iamblichus* is, that in treating of these very sublime Subjects he often shows himself credulous and superstitious.

Porphyrius was of Tyre, he was call'd *Malcho*. And therefore *Longinus*, in his Letters, calls him *the King of Tyre*, because *Maleho*, in the Phenician Language, signifies a King, for the same reason he is nam'd *Porphyrius*, which signifies *one cloath'd with purple*; that is to say, a King. The Ancients have preserved to us many things which he wrote on the Philosophy of *Plato* and *Pythagoras*: but he was a Man of a wicked Mind, and very satyirical; and was moreover so inclin'd to Magick, that this sacrilegious Curiosity of his obscur'd the greatest Discoveries of Truth which he had received from *Plato*. His Treatise of Abstinence is the best, and most useful thing he compos'd.

Plotinus in my Opinion excels all the rest. Not but that he is often very abstracted and hard to be under-

understood ; but in general he is more intelligible than *Proclus* ; and for Morality much Advantage may be reap'd from his Writings. And 'tis happy that his finest Treatises are the most plain and intelligible. *Longinus* says of him, that he has more clearly explain'd the Principles of *Plato* and *Pythagoras* than any Philosopher before him. He says his Writings are worthy of the Esteem, and Veneration of all Men ; and adds, that though the greatest part of the Matters on which he treats seem to him incomprehensible ; and do not affect him ; he can never be weary in admiring his Style, the Solidity of his Thoughts and Conceptions, the depth of his researches, and the truly Philosophical manner in which he handles his subjects.

When *Longinus* says, he is not always affected with the Subjects which *Plotinus* handles, he principally respects what he wrote on Ideas. For *Longinus* had labour'd to refute *Porphyrius*, who was brought over to the Sentiment of *Plotinus* after having written against him ; That is *Longinus* could not conceive the Doctrine of Ideas, and was of *Aristotle's* sentiment, who took what *Diogenes* had said to ridicule this Opinion, too literally : For *Diogenes* being one day at Table with *Plato* ; and being fallen in Conversation upon immaterial and eternal Exemplars, says he to *Plato*. *I see very well there is a Goblet and a Table, but I see neither Gobleity nor Tableity.* To which *Plato* answer'd, 'Tis because thou hast bodily Eyes which can see a Goblet and a Table, but not those of the Mind, which alone see Gobleity and Tableity.

Never did any Disciple do more honour to his Master than *Plotinus* did to *Plato* both by his Manners and Doctrine.

It was he that first said, *God was mov'd merely by his Mercy to give our Souls only Mortal Chains.* By which he signifies that it was an Effect of his Compassions that he gave us Bodies subject to Death ; that so we might not always be expos'd to the Miseries of this Life.

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He was convinc'd that our Souls draw all their Light and Sagacity only from that intelligible Light which created 'em ; that the Soul has no Nature superior to it but that of God alone ; and that the Angels and other Celestial Spirits derive their Happiness and Knowledg from no other Source than that which enlightens us, and renders us happy. His Manners were yet more admirable than his Doctrine. He all his Life despis'd Vain-Glory, Riches and Pleasures ; and his Probity was so generally known ; that the most considerable persons of both Sexes, when they dyed, entrusted him with their Estates and Children ; as not being able to find a more faithful Depositary, or more sacred Asylum.

Maximus Tyrius wrote on *Homer's* Doctrine, and on the Matters of Philosophy ; almost all the Discourses which we have of his do either directly or indirectly respect *Plato's* Philosophy. The Reading of 'em is very agreeable and very useful : But they supply us with no more Aid for the understanding of the Difficulties of *Plato*, than all the rest. And in this respect one may say the uselessness of these Commentaries proves the truth of one of *Plato's* Sentements, who held, that it serves to very little purpose to write on those sublime Sciences, and that the true manner of teaching 'em is by Conversation, which is the only way to perswade a Man after such a manner, that he shall not have the least difficulty remain upon his Mind, and that he shall be capable of convincing another of the same thing : For we never well understand a Truth ; if we are not in a condition on all Occasions to make it known to such as have all necessary Dispositions to receive it. And this was likewise the reason that *Plato* was more known, and better understood at *Rome* in *Cicero's* time than he is now. Because he was read in the Company of Philosophers, and nothing shortens Difficulties so much as Living Commentaries. Unhappily for us these living Commentaries are now very rare, or to speak more plainly are

not to be found. For of all our Philosophers there is not one who has closely applied himself to the reading of *Plato*, a Negligence not to be excus'd. If the reading of *Plato* should not render us more Learned, 'tis certain however that it might make us better, less proud, and more wise, not only with that Humane Wisdom which qualifies us externally to fill up all the Duties of our civil Life; but also with that sovereign Wisdom which disposes us to obey God, and to subject our selves to the Truths of Religion, and which alone makes up the true Character of a Philosopher.

Being therefore destitute of all help from living Commentaries, for the understanding of *Plato*; I apply my self to *Plato* himself, and shall endeavour to give a faithful Translation accompanied with some Remarks, in those places which are most difficult and of greatest Importance. It may be the Facility of reading him in this dress will attract some Readers. But however the success be, I shall never repent of having employ'd my time in translating some Treatises of a truly divine Philosopher since he had the glorious priviledg of being in the hand of God an Instrument of Light and Grace for the Conversion of *St. Augustin*; and perhaps may be so to some of us.

The

The ARGUMENT
OF THE
First *ALCIBIADES*.

IN this Dialogue which is Intituled OF HUMANE NATURE, Plato attempts to cure our Pride and Self-love, by setting the Infirmities and Defects of Humane Nature in the clearest Light; and by prescribing the means which ought to be us'd to reform it, with the care we ought to take of our selves. The matter in question therefore is to know what We our Selves are; and above all that part of the Dialogue which treats of this appears to be Divine. For here Plato teaches, that Man is the reasonable Soul, which participates of Understanding, and makes use of the Body. The Soul as reasonable makes use of her Reason to reflect on her self; and to know her own Necessities; as she participates of Understanding, she makes use of this to raise her up toward God, and to know her self in that resplendent Light, in which only we can be able perfectly to view our selves; and to know what is good, profitable, lovely, just, in a word the true Good, of which that is the Fountain: And 'tis this knowledg alone that sets us right, and which by directing our Actions renders them useful both to our selves and others. But that it may not be thought that it absolutely depends on us to acquire this Perfection, he assures us that all our Efforts will be useless without the assistance of God. We shall find here besides this other Truths as surprising in a Pagan; for instance, that which he says of the two sorts of Ignorance, one of which is good and t'other evil; and what he teaches us concerning particular things, that the knowledg of these is not suf-

166 The Argument of the First Alcibiades.

sufficient to produce the Peace and Union of States and Families; and that we have need of the knowledg of universal things, which alone produces Charity the Mother of Union. 'Tis not necessary here to set off all the Beauties of this Dialogue, I shall only remark in general, that all these Dialogues are as so many pieces of the Theatre; Comedy reigns in some of 'em, and Tragedy in others. This is of the latter kind; and in some sort resembles Sophocles his Oedipus. For as in that Piece we see a Prince who from the highest Pinacle of Grandeur, and after he had been look'd upon as a God falls into a most deplorable state of Misery: We here in like manner see Alcibiades, after having been counted worthy of the greatest Honours, obliged to acknowledg that he deserves only to be a Slave. They that are shock'd at the passionate manner in which Socrates speaks to Alcibiades at the beginning of this Dialogue, will cease to be offended when they have read it out; for they'll then see 'tis a very innocent Passion; design'd only for the advancement of Vertue. Young People would be very happy, if they always found Friends that lov'd 'em as truly and piously as Socrates loved Alcibiades; for as Plutarch says, He did not seek with him an Efferminate Pleasure unworthy of a Man, but cured the Corruption of his Soul, fill'd the Void of his Mind; and repress'd his extravagant Vanity. He endeavour'd to lead him out of Darknes and conduct him to the true Light. 'Tis not difficult to fix the Time in which Plato supposes this Dialogue to have been made, since he tell us Alcibiades was then in the 20th Year of his Age; it must have been therefore in the 3d Year of the LXXXVII Olympiade, one Year before the death of Pericles.

This Dialogue is *μακροτεχνος*, that is Socrates so manages the matter, as to make Alcibiades of himself find out the Truths which he has a mind to teach him.

T H E

THE
First *ALCIBIADES*,

OR
Of the Nature of Man.

Socrates, Alcibiades.

Socrates. **O** Son of *Clinias*, you are without doubt surpriz'd, that since I was the first that lov'd you, I should likewise be the last; and that whereas others have pursued you with their importunate Visits, I have been so many Years without speaking to you. 'Tis no Humane Consideration that has retained me; But a regard altogether * Divine; which I'll explain to you hereafter. At present while that God who conducts me lays me under no restraint; I make use of the permission he gives me to accost you; and I hope our Conversation for the time to come will not be disagreeable to him. I have hitherto observ'd with Joy how you have conducted your self towards my Rivals; among that great number of proud and haughty Men who have adher'd to you, there is not one whom you have not shock'd by your Iofly Carriage. And I am now willing to tell you the cause of the Contempt you have had for 'em. You think you have no need of any Man;

* *A Regard altogether divine*) he means he was not willing to speak to him without the Permission of God, under whose Conduct he is, and that God would not suffer him to speak, during the great Tendernefs of *Alcibiades* his Youth, which would have render'd all his Instructions useless. See the Argument of the Apology about the Genius that conducted *Socrates*.

The Pride
of Alcibi-
ades, and
the reason of
it.

for liberally has Nature, as you suppose, indulged you with all the Goods both of Body and Mind. For first of all * you think your self to be one of the finest and best made Men in the World ; and 'tis very certain in this you are not mistaken. In the second place you are sensible of the Advantage of † your birth ; for you are of the most Illustrious House of *Athens* ; which is the most considerable of all the Cities of *Greece*. On your Fathers side you have a great many very powerful Relations and Friends to support you on all Occasions : You have no less Number, nor less considerable in Quality on your Mother's Side ; and that which you think yet more augments your Reputation, is that your Father left you *Pericles* for your Guardian ; whose Authority is so great, that he does what he pleases not only in this City, but likewise in all *Greece*, and among the most powerful of the Barbarous Nations. I might also speak of your Riches, if I did not know that these are the least occasion of your Vanity. ‡ All these great Advantages have inspired you with so much Pride, that you have despis'd all your Admirers as so many Inferiours not worthy of loving you. Accordingly they have all left you, and you have very well observ'd it ; therefore I am very sure you can't sufficiently wonder what reasons I can have to continue in my former passion ; and are considering what hope I can yet have to follow you after all my Rivals have retired.

* *Plutarch* reports, that the Beauty of *Alcibiades*, kept in a florid state, through all the Ages of his Life ; and that the saying of *Euripides*, That the Autumn of handsome Men is gay, was verified in him.

† On the side of his Father *Clinias*, he descended from *Euryfanes*, the Son of *Ajax* ; and on the side of his Mother *Dinomache*, he was *Alcmaeonides*, and descended from *Megacles*.

‡ The most noted and strongest Passions *Alcibiades* had, were a boundless Vanity which made him endeavour to carry all before him with an Air of Haughtiness, and an unlimited Ambition, which made either a superior, or equal, always seem intolerable to him ; this made *Archestratus* say, *Greece could not bear two Alcibiades*, *Plutar.*

Alcib.

Alcibiades. But one thing which without doubt you don't know, *Socrates*, is that you have prevented me but a Moment, and that I designed to speak to you first to ask the Reason of your Obstinacy. What do you mean, or what is it you hope for, that you trouble me after this manner, using your utmost diligence continually to attend me in every place whither I go? for in fine I can't enough wonder at your Deportment; and you'll do me a pleasure to tell me once for all to what you pretend.

Socrat. That is you'll freely hear me, seeing you have a mind to know my Thoughts; I shall therefore now speak to you, as to one who will have patience to hear me, and will not take Occasion to get away from me.

Alcib. Yes, you may so.

Socrat. Consider well to what you engage your self; that you may not be surpriz'd, if I find it as hard for me to make an end, as it has been to begin.

Alcib. Speak, *Socrates*, I'll give you as much time as you please.

Socrat. Well then I'll obey you; and though it be a very difficult thing for a Man to speak to a Person he loves, who yet does not love him; I must take the Courage to tell you my thoughts. For my part, *Alcibiades*, if I had always seen you devoted to your Vanity and Grandeur, and in the design of living, as you have hitherto done, in your Luxury and Softness; I should also have long ago renounc'd my Passion for you; at least I flatter my self that I should have done so. But now I am going to discover to You your own Thoughts, which are very different from those you have had formerly; and by this you'll know that the reason of my obstinate persisting in following you up and down, was, to study You. I am ready to think, that if some God should all on a sudden say to you, *Alcibiades*; would you rather choose to live with all the Advantages you have at present, than to die, if you were withal forbidden to aspire to the Possession of yet greater
for

for the future. I am ready to think, I say, that you would choose to die : So that this appears to be the hope with which you flatter your self, and which makes you in love with Life : You are persuaded, that you shall have no sooner harangued the Athenians, and that will be within a very little time, but you'll make 'em sensible you deserve to be honour'd more than *Pericles*, or any of our greatest Citizens ; that you shall soon be Master of this City ; and that your Power shall extend over all the Cities of *Greece*, and over the Barbarous Nations that inhabit our Continent. And if this God should farther say, *Alcibiades*, you shall be King of all *Europe* ; but you shall not extend your Dominion over the Provinces of *Asia* ; I believe you would not be willing to live for so small a Empire ; unless you could fill the whole World with the noise of your Name. You esteem none but *Cyrus* and *Xerxes* ; and as you are charm'd with their Glory, you propose them as Patterns for your imitation. These are the Views you have. I know it, and 'tis not mere conjecture. You very well know I say nothing but the Truth, and therefore perhaps you'll ask me ; what respect, *Socrates*, has this Preamble of yours to that you had a mind to say to explain to me the reasons you have to follow me every where ? I'll immediately satisfy you of that, O Son of *Clinias*. 'Tis because the * great Projects you form in your head can never be put in Execution without my Assistance ; so much Power have I over all your Affairs, and over your self too. And hence it is without doubt, that the God who governs me, has never suffer'd me to speak to you till now, and I have been long waiting for his Permission. Now therefore as you hope that, when you have convinc'd your Fellow-Citizens that you are worthy of the greatest Honours, they will make you Master of their Fortunes ; I also hope you will make

* The Designs of the Ambitious can't succeed but by the Counsels of the Wise.

me Master of your Conduct, when I have convinc'd you, that I am more worthy of this Honour than any other Person, and that you have neither Guardian, Friend nor Brother that can give you that great Power to which you aspire; there is none but I that can do it with the help of God. While you were Younger, and had not this great Ambition, God was not pleas'd to suffer me to speak to you, that my Words might not be thrown away. Now he gives me leave to break Silence; and you are indeed in a better Disposition to hear me.

Alcib. I confess, *Socrates*, * you seem to me a more strange Person since you have begun to speak than while you were silent; tho' indeed I have always taken you for an odd sort of a Man. It seems then you know my thoughts perfectly well, so let it be; if I should tell you the contrary, I should have enough to do to convince you. But I pray tell me how you will be able to prove, that with your Assistance, I shall effect the great things I am projecting, and that I can do nothing without you?

Socrat. Do you ask me if I am capable of making a long Discourse † as they do whom you are wont to hear? You know that is not my manner. But if you would (tho' never so little) comply with my way, I'll do all I can to convince you that I have advanced nothing but what is true.

Alcib. I am willing to comply with it, provided 'tis not very difficult.

Socrat. Is it so difficult a Matter to answer a few Questions?

Alcib. No, if that be all, I am willing to do it.

Socrat. Answer me then.

Alcib. Well interrogate me as soon as you please.

*The Wisdom of *Socrates* could not but seem mere Folly to *Alcibiades*, especially while *Socrates* promises him such great things, which he could not tell how to comprehend.

† He reproaches him for amusing himself too much in hearing the long Discourses of the Sophists. For *Alcibiades* pretended much to Eloquence, which made him so much relish those studied Discourses.

Socrat.

Socrat. May we not suppose that you have always those great Thoughts which I have attributed to you ?

Alcib. I agree to it ; I shall at least have the satisfaction of hearing what you have to say to me.

Socrat. I believe I am not mistaken, you are preparing to go in a few days to the Assembly of the Athenians to make them participate of the Knowledge and Skill you have acquired. And if I should meet you at that instant and ask you, *Alcibiades*, what are the Matters about which you are going to advise the Athenians ? Are they not such things as you know better than they ? What would you answer me ?

Alcib. Without doubt I should answer, 'tis about such things as I know better than they.

Socrat. For you would not know how to give good Counsel but in Matters that you know ?

Alcib. How should any one give it in other things ?

Socrat. And is it not certain, that you know nothing but what you have either learn'd of others, or what you have found out your self ?

Alcib. What can one know otherwise ?

Socrat. But have you learnt any thing of others, or found out any thing your self ; when you have neither been willing to learn nor search into any thing ?

Alcib. Thar cannot be.

Socrat. Have you ever thought it worth your while to endeavour to find out, or learn, what you believ'd you already understood ?

Alcib. No certainly.

Socrat. There was a time then, in which you thought your self ignorant of what you now know ?

Alcib. That is very true.

Socrat. But I pretty well know what are the things you have learn'd. If I forget any one of 'em mention it to me. You have learnt, (if my Memory don't deceive me) to read and write, to play on the

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the Harp; and to wrestle: * but as for the Flute you did not value it. This is all you understand, unless you have learn'd some other thing that I never knew of. And yet † I don't think you have gone abroad either Day or Night, but I have been a Witness to the Steps you have taken.

Alcib. 'Tis very true, these are the only things I have learn'd.

Socrat. Will you then when the Athenians enter into a Deliberation about Writing, to know how that Art ought to be practis'd, rise up to give 'em your advice?

Alcib. No surely.

Socrat. Shall it be when they consult about the Different Tunes in Musick?

Alcib. A fine Consultation indeed!

Socrat. Nor are the Athenians us'd to deliberate on the various Turns us'd in Wrestling:

Alcib. No certainly.

Socrat. What is it then you expect they will consider, wherein you may give 'em advice? It must not be about the manner of building a House neither; the meanest Brick-layer would be able to advise 'em how to do that better than you.

Alcib. He would so.

Socrat. Nor must it be about any point of Divination, you are not so well acquainted with that Business as every Diviner is, let him be small or great, handsome or ugly, of high or low Birth.

Alcib. What does all that signify?

Socrat. Nor is it any matter whether he be rich or poor, for good Counsel proceeds from knowledg, and not from Riches.

Alcib.

* He look'd upon it as an ignoble Instrument, and unworthy of the Application of a Free-man. But the principal Cause of this Aversion was, because it spoil'd the graceful Air of his Countenance.

† *Alcibiades* was Night and Day besieg'd by a corrupt sort of Men, who made it their constant endeavour to seduce him. But *Socrates*, like a good Father, kept him always in his sight, to secure him from all those dangers, well knowing that none but himself was capable of preserving him from so great Perils.

Alcib. That's easily granted.

Socrat. And if the Athenians should take into consideration the ways and means of recovering their Health; do you think they would not send for a Physician to consult him without giving themselves any farther trouble?

Alcib. No doubt of it.

Socrat. When is it then, d'ye think, that you'll rise up with any Colour of Reason to give 'em good Advice?

Alcib. When they deliberate on their Affairs.

Socrat. What, when they consult about the building of Ships; to know what sort of Vessels they should make?

Alcib. No, not that neither.

Socrat. For you never learnt to build Ships; That's the reason I suppose you will not speak of that Matter; is it not?

Alcib. To be sure, I'll say nothing on that Subject.

Socrat. When is it then that their Affairs will be so deliberated, that you'll put in with a Speech?

Alcib. When they have before 'em the business of Peace and War, or any other thing belonging to Government.

Socrat. You mean, when they consider with what Nations 'tis proper for 'em to make War or Peace; and when and how it ought to be made?

Alcib. You hit it.

Socrat. Peace or War ought to be made with those Nations with whom 'tis best to make either the one or the other; and when the best Occasion offers, and also after the best Manner; and as long as it continues to be best.

Alcib. True.

Socrat. If the Athenians should consult with what Wrestlers 'tis best to take the Lock, and what others 'tis best to deal with * at Armes-end without clo-

* 'Tis a kind of Wrestling Hippocrates speaks of in his 11th Book of Diet, Chap. XI. To wrestle only with the Arms, without taking hold of the body, makes one lean, and draws the Flesh upward.

fin-
g in to 'em, and when and how these different
Exercifes ought to be perform'd, should you give
better advice in these Matters than the Master of the
Wrestling-ground ?

Alcib. No Question but he would give the best
Counfel in this ease.

Socrat. Can you tell me what this Wrestling-Mas-
ter would principally regard in giving his Instructions,
with whom, when and how these different Exer-
cifes ought to be perform'd ? Would he not have
respect only to what is best ?

Alcib. Without doubt he would.

Socrat. Then he would order 'em to be perform'd
as often as it should be best so to do ; and on such
Occasions as should be most proper.

Alcib. Very true.

Socrat. He that Sings ought sometimes to joine his
Voice with the Harp ; and sometimes to dance as he
Plays and Sings, and in all this he should conduct him-
self by what is best.

Alcib. That is most certain.

Socrat. Seeing then there is a Best in fing-
ing, and in playing on Instruments as well as in Wrestling, how
will you call this Best ? For as for that of Wrest-
ling, all the World calls it the most *Gymnastick*.

Alcib. I don't understand you.

Socrat. Endeavour to follow me ; for my part I
should answer that this Best, is that which is always
the Best, and is not that which is always the best,
that which is most according to the Rules of the Art
it self >

Alcib. You have reason.

Socrat. What is this Art or Wrestling ? is it not
the *Gymnastick* Art ?

Alcib. Yes.

Socrat. What I have been saying, is that that which
is best in the Art of Wrestling, is call'd the most *Gym-
nastick*.

Alcib. This is what you have already said.

Socrat. And this is Right.

Alcib.

Alcib. Very Right.

Socrat. Come then, do you also endeavour to give me a right answer. How do you call that Art, which teaches to Sing, to play on the Harp, and to dance well? Can't you tell me that?

Alcib. No indeed *Socrates*.

Socrat. Try if you can't hit on't in this way. How do you call the Goddeffes, that preside over this Art?

Alcib. You mean the Muses.

Socrat. Very well. Let us see then what name this Art has derived from them.

Alcib. O, 'tis Musick you speak of.

Socrat. Very right; and as I told you that which was perform'd according to the Rules of the Art of Wrestling or of the *Gymnasium* is call'd *Gymnastick*: tell me also how you call that which is according to the Rules of this other Art.

Alcib. I call it *Musical*, and say such a thing is done *Musically*.

Socrat. Very good. And in the Art of making War and in that of making Peace, what is that which is best, and how do you call it? Seing as to those two other Arts you say that which is best in the one is that which is most *Gymnastick*, and that which is best in the other is that which is most *Musical*; try now in like manner to tell me the name of that which is best in the Arts we are now upon.

Alcib. Indeed *Socrates*, I can't tell.

Socrat. But if any one should hear you discoursing, and giving Advice about several sorts of Food, and saying that is better than this, both for the Season and Quality of it? and should ask you, *Alcibiades*, what is it that you call better? would it not be a shame, if you could not answer, that you mean by better, that which is more wholesome. Yet 'tis not your profession to be a Physician. And is it not a yet greater shame that you know not how to give an answer in things you profess to know, and about which you pretend to give Advice, as understanding them better than others? Does not this cover you with Confusion?

Alcib.

Alcib. I confess it does.

Socrat. Apply your Mind to it then; and endeavour to give me an Account what is the design of that better thing, which we seek in the Art of making Peace or War with those with whom we ought to be either in War or Peace.

Alcib. I know not how to find it out, what Effort soever I make.

Socrat. What don't you know that when we make War we complain of something that has been done to us by those against whom we take up Arms? And are you ignorant of the Name we give to the thing of which we complain?

Alcib. I know on such Occasions we say, they have deceived us, they have insulted us; they have taken away our property.

Socrat. Very well, when one of these things befalls us, I pray explain to me the different manner in which they may happen.

Alcib. You mean, *Socrates* that they may befall us justly or unjustly.

Socrat. I do so.

Alcib. And that makes an infinite difference.

Socrat. Against what People then shall the Athenians declare War by your Advice? shall it be against such as follow the Rules of Justice, or such as act unjustly?

Alcib. A Pretty Question, *Socrates*; if any one should be capable of thinking it needful to make War with those that follow the Rules of Justice; do you think he would dare to own it?

Socrat. Because, you'll say, that is not conformable to the Laws.

Alcib. No, doubtless; 'tis neither just, nor honorable.

Socrat. You'll always then have Justice in view in all you Counsels?

Alcib. That is very necessary.

Socrat. But is not that better thing about which I was just now enquiring of you on the Subject of

Peace or War, viz. to know with whom, when and how War and Peace should be made, * always the most just ?

Alcib. I am of that mind.

Socrat. How comes this to pass then, my dear *Alcibiades*, is it that you perceive not that you are ignorant of what is just, or is it that I perceive not that you have learn'd it, and that you have secretly attended some Master who has taught you to distinguish well between what is most just, and what is most unjust ? Who is this Master ; I pray tell me, that you may put me under his Care, and recommend me to him ?

Alcib. These are your common Ironies, *Socrates*.

Socrat. No, I swear it by that God who presides over our Friendship, and whom I would least offend by Perjury. I very seriously entreat you, if you have a Master, tell me who he is ?

Alcib. And what if I have none, do you think I could not otherwise know what is just and unjust ?

Socrat. You know it if you have found it out your self.

Alcib. Do you think I have not found it out ?

Socrat. I am perswaded you have found it if you have sought for it.

Alcib. D'ye think I have not sought for it ?

Socrat. You have sought for it, if you have believed your self ignorant of it.

Alcib. Do you then imagine there was not a time when I was ignorant of it ?

Socrat. You speak better than you think, but can you then precisely assign me the Time, when you believed you did not know what was just and unjust ? Let us see, was it the last year that you sought for the knowledge of this being thoroughly convinced of your Ignorance in this Matter ? Or did you then think you knew it ? Tell the truth, that our Con-

* It is not sufficient to know what is just, we should know what is most just, and this point is very difficult to be found: this is not within the reach of little Politicians. *M. Le Fevre.*

version

versation may not appear vain and trifling.

Alcib. The last year I believed I knew it.

Socrat. And did you not think the same, three, four or five years ago?

Alcib. Yes.

Socrat. And before that time you were no more than a Child, were you?

Alcib. Very true.

Socrat. And at that time when you were but a Child, I am very sure you thought you knew it.

Alcib. How are you so sure of that?

Socrat. Because during your Child-hood, when you were with your Masters and elsewhere; and * when you play'd at Dice, or any other play; I have very often observed you did not hesitate to determine what was just, or unjust, and to tell the first of your Play-fellows that offended you, with a great deal of plainness and assurance, that he was base and unfair, and did you a great deal † of Injustice. Is not this True?

Alcib. What should I have done then do you think when any Injustice was done me?

Socrat. If you were ignorant that what was offer'd you was unjust, you might then have ask'd what you should have done.

Alcib. But I was not at all ignorant of that, for I very well knew the Injustice that was done me.

Socrat. By this you see then, that when you were but a Child you thought you knew what was Just and Unjust.

Alcib. I thought I knew it; and so I really did.

Socrat. At what time did you find this out? for it was not when you thought you knew it.

Alcib. No. Doubtless.

Socrat. At what time then do you think you were

* See what *Alcibiades* did one day as he was playing at Dice, as 'tis reported by *Plutarch* in the beginning of his Life.

† When Children trick'd one another in their play, the ordinary Term they us'd at *Athens* was *αδίκησις* you do me Injustice, or as we say *You do me wrong*. There is a very express Instance of it, in *Aristophanes* his *Clouds*. *M. Le Fevre.*

+ ignorant of it ? Consider, reckon. I am much affraid you'll not be able to find that time.

Alcib. Indeed *Socrates* I can't give you an Account of it.

Socrat. Then you have not found out of your self the knowledge of what is Just and Unjust ?

Alcib. So it seems, *Socrates*.

+ *Socrat.* You just now acknowledged that you had not learned it of others neither : and if you have neither found it out your self, nor learn'd it of others, how came you to know it ? whence had it you ?

Alcib. But perhaps I mistook my self, and did not answer you well, when I told you I had found it out my self.

Socrat. How did you learn it then ?

Alcib. I learn'd it as others did.

For it must
be enquir'd
how, and of
whom others
learn'd it,
and that
goes ad
Infinitum.

Socrat. Then we are to begin again, tell me of whom you learn'd it.

Alcib. I learn'd it of the People.

Socrat. Now you quote a bad Master.

Alcib. What is not the People capable of teaching it ?

Socrat. So far from that, that they are not capable of teaching one to judge right * of a Game at Tables ; and that is much less important and less difficult, than to understand Justice ; don't you think so as well as I ?

Alcib. Yes without doubt.

Socrat. And if they know not how to teach you things of little or no consequence, how should they teach you things of this Importance and Solidity ?

Alcib. I am of your mind ; yet the people are capable of teaching a great many things much more solid, than any thing that belongs to this Play.

Socrat. What are those ?

Alcib. Our Language for Instance ; I learn'd that

* This play was neither our Draughts nor Chess ; but a more Philosophical Game, for it taught the motions of the Heavens, the course of the Sun, that of the Moon, the Eclipses, &c. *Plato* says in his *Phædrus*, it was invented by the Egyptians.

only of the People ; I can't name you any one single Master I had for it ; I am altogether oblig'd to the people for it, whom yet you account so bad a Master.

Socrat. This is a very different case. * In this the people is a very Excellent Master ; and we have always Reason to apply our selves to 'em on this Account.

Alcib. Why ?

Socrat. Because they have every thing that the best Masters ought to have.

Alcib. Why, what have they ?

Socrat. Ought not they that would teach others any thing, first to know it well themselves ?

Alcib. Who doubts it ?

Socrat. Ought not they who know any thing well to agree about what they know, and never dispute about it ; for if they should dispute about it, would you believe 'em to be well instructed in it ? and could they be able to teach it to others ?

Alcib. By no means.

Socrat. Do you see the people disagree about what a Stone and a Stick is ? Ask all our Citizens that question, they'll answer you alike, and when they go about to take up a Stone or a Stick, they'll all run to the same thing, and so of the rest. For I understand this is what you mean by knowing the Language ; all our Citizens constantly agree about this both with one another, and with themselves. Of all our Greek Cities there is not one that disputes about the Signification and use of Words. So that the People are very good to teach us the Tongue ; and we can't do better than to learn of 'em, but if instead of desiring to learn what a Horse is, we would know what a good Horse is ; would the People, do you think, be capable of informing us ?

Alcib. No certainly.

Socrat. For one certain sign that they don't know

* This was true at Athens especially, where all the Citizens speaking perfectly well, and there being no different use of Words, as now adays among us, the people was an Excellent Master for the ground of the Language. Therefore *Aristophanes* says, the first Comer was a Child's Master.

it, and that they know not how to teach it, is that they can't agree about it among themselves. In like manner if we desire to know, not what a Man is, but what a sound or unsound Man is ; would the People be in a Condition to teach us this ?

Alcib. Still less than the other.

Socrat. And when you should see 'em agree so little among themselves ; would you not judge 'em to be very bad Instructors ?

Alcib. Without any difficulty.

Socrat. And do you think the People agree better with themselves or others about what is just and unjust ?

Alcib. No indeed *Socrates*.

Socrat. You believe then they agree least of all about that ?

Alcib. I am thoroughly convinc'd of it.

Socrat. Have you ever seen or read that to maintain that a thing is sound or unsound, Men have taken up Arms against each other, and knock'd one another o'th' head ?

Alcib. What a folly must that be !

Socrat. Well, if you have not seen it, at least you have read that this has happen'd to maintain that a thing is just or unjust. For you have read *Homer's* *Odyssée* and *Iliade*.

Alcib. Yes Certainly.

The cause of the Trojan War; and of all other Wars is Ignorance and Injustice.

Socrat. Is not the difference Men have always had about Justice and Injustice, the foundation of those Poems ? Was it not this difference that caused so many Battles and Slaughters between the Greeks and Trojans ? was it not this that made *Ulysses* undergo so many Dangers and so much Toil, and that ruin'd *Penelope's* Lovers ?

Alcib. You say right.

Socrat. Was it not this same difference that destroy'd so many Athenians, Lacedemonians, and Beotians at the famous † Battel of *Tanagra*, and after

* This great Battle was fought the last year of the LXXX Olympiade. The Athenian Captain, who gain'd it, was nam'd *Myro-nides*. *Socrates* was then 12 years of Age, or therabout. *M. Le Fevre.*

that again at the * Battle of *Coronea* where your Father was kill'd ?

Alcib. Who can deny this ?

Socrat. Shall we then dare to say the people knows a thing well, about which they dispute with so much Animosity, that they are carried to the most fatal Extremities ?

Alcib. No certainly.

Socrat. Very good ! And yet are not these the Masters you cite, when at the same time you acknowledge their Ignorance ?

Alcib. I confess it.

Socrat. What Probability then is there that you should know what is Just and Unjust, about which you appear so uncertain and fluctuating ; and which you confess you have neither learn'd of others, nor found out your self ?

Alcib. According to what you say there is no Probability of it at all.

Socrat. How ! according to what I say ? You speak not right, *Alcibiades*, say rather 'tis according to what you say your self.

Alcib. How ! is it not you that say, I know nothing at all of what belongs to Justice and Injustice ?

Socrat. No, indeed, 'tis not I.

Alcib. Who then ? Is it I ?

Socrat. Yes, 'tis your self.

Alcib. How so ?

Socrat. I'll tell you how so ; and you will agree with me. If I should ask you which is the greatest Number, one, or two ; you would immediatly answer two ; and if I should again ask you how much greater this Number is than the other ; you would likewise answer, that 'tis greater by one.

Alcib. Very true.

* This Battle of *Coronea* was fought the second year of the LXXXIII Olymp. Here the brave *Tolmides* was kill'd ; after which the Athenians were driven out of *Beotia*. *Socrates* was then 22 years of Age. This Battle of *Coronea* has often through mistake, been confounded with that of *Cheronea*. *M. Le Fèvre*.

The First Alcibiades ; or,

Socrat. Which of us two would it be then that would say two is more than one ; would it be I ?

Alcib. No, 'twould be I.

Socrat. For it was I that ask'd, and you that answer'd. Is it not the same thing in the present Question ? *Alcib.* That's certain.

Socrat. If I should ask you what Letters compose *Socrates* his Name, and you should tell 'em me one after another, which of us two would tell them ?

Alcib. I should do it without doubt.

Socrat. For in a Discourse which is spent in Questions and Answers ; he that asks never affirms, but always he that answers. 'Tis I that have ask'd you, and 'tis you that have answer'd, 'tis you therefore that have affirm'd the things you have said.

This proves the Usefulness of this Method.

Alcib. This must be granted.

Socrat. 'Tis your self that have said that the fine *Alcibiades* the Son of *Clinias*, not knowing what is Just and Unjust, and yet thinking he knows it very well, is going to the Assembly of the Athenians to give them his Advice about such things as he knows nothing of ; Is it not so ?

Alcib. 'Tis even so.

Socrat. One may then apply to you, *Alcibiades*, that saying of *Euripides*. 'Tis thy self that has named it. For it is not I that have spoken it, but your self ; and you are to blame to charge it on me.

'Tis in the Tragedy of Hippolytus.

Alcib. You have Reason.

Socrat. Believe me, *Alcibiades*, 'tis a wild Enterprize to have a mind to go teach the Athenians that which you do not know your self, and about which you have neglected to inform your self.

Alcib. I fancy, *Socrates*, the Athenians, and all the rest of the Greeks very rarely examine in their Counsel, what is most Just or Unjust ; for they are satisfied that is very evident. And therefore without amusing themselves with this vain Enquiry they only consider what is most advantageous and useful ; and Utility and Justice are very different things ; since there have always been people in the

World

World that have found themselves very prosperous in the Commission of great Injustice ; and others who have succeeded very ill, in the exercise of Justice.

Socrat. What do you * think then that, if what is Useful and what is Just are very different, as you say they are, you know what is useful to Men, and why it is so?

Alcib. What should hinder me, *Socrates* ; Unless you would ask me of whom I learn'd this too ; or how I found it out my self ?

Socrat. Is your proceeding just, *Alcibiades*, supposing what you say is not right, as that may very well be ; and that 'tis very easy to refute you by the same Reasons which I have already employ'd ? You would have new Proofs, and fresh Demonstrations, and treat the former as old Clothes, which you are not willing to wear any longer. You are still for having something entirely new ; but for my part, without following you in your Stragglings and Escapes, I shall ask you, as I have already done, whence you came to know what Utility is ; and who was your Instructor : In a word I ask you all I have ask'd you before. 'Tis very certain you'll answer me too after the same manner you have done, and that you'll not be able to shew me either that you have learn'd of others, to know what is useful, or that you have found it out your self. But because you are very nice, and don't love to hear the same thing twice, I am willing to drop this Question whether you know what is useful to the Athenians or no. But if what is just and what is useful are one and the same thing ; or if they are very different as you say, why have you not prov'd it to me ? Prove it me, either by interrogating me as I have dealt with you ; or in making me a fine Discourse which may set the Matter in a clear Light.

* If what is useful, and what is just, were different things, yet if one knew what is Useful, one might also know what is Just : For we know Contraries by their Contraries. But they are not different, and *Socrates* is going to prove it. *Alcibiades* knows no more what is useful than what is just.

Alcib.

Alcib. But, *Socrates* I know not whether I am capable of speaking before you.

Socrat. My dear *Alcibiades*, imagine me to be the Assembly, suppose me to be the People : When you are among them, must you not endeavour to persuade every one of 'em ?

Alcib. Yes.

Socrat. And when a Man knows a thing well, is it not equal to him to demonstrate to this and that Person one after another ; or to prove it to divers Persons all at once ; as one that teaches Reading or Arithmetick can equally instruct one or more Scholars together ?

Alcib. That's certain.

Socrat. And consequently of whatsoever you are capable of persuading many you may very easily persuade one single Person. But of what can a Man persuade others, is it not of that which he knows himself ?

Alcib. Without doubt.

Socrat. What other difference is there between an Orator that speaks to a multitude of People, and a Man that discourses with his Friend in familiar Conversation, but that the former persuades a great Number of People at once, and the latter persuades but one ?

Alcib. 'Tis likely there may be no other difference.

Socrat. Come then ; Since he who is capable of proving what he knows to many, is by a much stronger Reason capable of proving it to one single person ; display here all your Eloquence to me, and endeavour to shew me that what is just is not always useful.

Alcib. You are very urgent, *Socrates*.

Socrat. I am so urgent, that I'll presently prove to you the contrary of that which you refuse to prove to me.

Alcib. Do so.

Socrat. Only answer me.

Alcib. Ha ! Nothing but Questions ; let me intreat you to speak your self alone.

Socrat.

Socrat. What are you not willing to be convinc'd ?

Alcib. Yes with all my heart.

Socrat. When you your self shall grant, and affirm to me that what I advance is true, will you not be convinc'd ?

Alcib. I think I shall.

Socrat. Answer me then : And if you your self don't say that what is just is always useful, never believe any Man living that shall tell you so.

Alcib. Agreed, I am ready to answer you, for I shall receive no damage by it.

Socrat. You are a Prophet, *Alcibiades* ; but tell me ; do you think there are some just things which are useful, and others which are not so ?

Alcib. Yes certainly.

Socrat. Do you think too that some of them are comely and honorable, and others the quite contrary ?

Alcib. How do you say ?

Socrat. I ask you for instance, if a Man who does an Action that is shameful, does an Action that is just ?

Alcib. I am very far from such a thought.

Socrat. You believe then that whatsoever is just is comely.

Alcib. I am entirely convinc'd of that.

Socrat. But is every thing that is comely and honorable good ? or do you think there are some comely and honorable things that are Good, and others that are Evil ?

Alcib. For my part, *Socrates* I think there are some honorable things that are Evil.

Socrat. And by consequence that there are some shameful things that are Good ?

Alcib. Yes.

Socrat. See if I understand you well. It has often happen'd in Battles, that one Man in attempting to succour his Friend, or Relation, has receiv'd a great many Wounds, or has been kill'd ; and another, by abandoning his Relation, or Friend, has sav'd his Life : Is not this your meaning ?

Alcib. 'Tis the very thing I would say.

Socrat.

Alcibiades is afraid of Socrates his Questions, which shows this to be the best method to convince and refute.

Socrat. The succour a Man gives to his Friend is a comely and honourable thing, in that he endeavours to save one whom he is oblig'd to save ; and is not this what we call Valour.

Alcib. Yes.

Socrat. And this very Succour is an evil thing, in that it is the cause of a Man's receiving Wounds, or of being kill'd ?

Alcib. Yes, without doubt.

Socrat. * But is not Valour one thing, and Death another ?

Alcib. Yes certainly.

Socrat. This Succour then which a Man gives to his Friend, is not at the same time an honourable and an evil thing in the same respect.

Alcib. So I think.

Socrat. But observe, if that which renders this Action comely, is not that which also renders it good : for you have your self acknowledg'd that in respect of Valour this Action was comely. Let us now examine whether Valour is a Good or an Evil. And I'll shew you the way to make this Examen a-right. Do you desire for your self Goods or Evils ?

Alcib. Goods without doubt.

Socrat. And the greatest ?

Alcib. Yes, you may be sure on't.

Socrat. And would you not suffer any one to deprive you of 'em ?

Alcib. Why should I suffer that ?

Socrat. What do you think of Valour ? at what rate do you value it ? is there any good in the World for which you would be depriv'd of it ?

Alcib. No, not Life it self. What to be a Coward ? I would a thousand times rather choose to dye.

* *Socrates* means, that Valour and Death being two very different things, 'tis ridiculous to judg of one by the other : But each of 'em ought to be examin'd by it self. The former of these is the thing under debate, and not the latter. This is extremely ingenious ; and *Alcibiades* did not expect such a very quick Re-
parree.

Socrat.

Socrat. Then Cowardise seems to you the greatest of all Evils?

Alcib. Yes.

Socrat. And more to be fear'd than Death itself?

Alcib. Most certainly.

Socrat. Are not Life and Valour the Contraries to Death and Cowardise?

Alcib. Who doubts it?

Socrat. You desire the former, and by no means wish for the latter; is it not because you find those very good, and these very evil?

Alcib. Yes doubtless.

Socrat. You have your self acknowledg'd, that the Succour a Man gives to his Friend in Battle is a comely and honourable Action; if it be consider'd with respect to the good that is in it, which is Valour.

Alcib. I have acknowledg'd it.

Socrat. And that 'tis an evil Action, when consider'd with respect to the Evil that attends it, that is Wounds and Death.

Alcib. I confess it.

Socrat. * Then it hence follows, that we ought to call each Action according to what it produces; we ought to call it Good, if Good springs from it; and Evil, if Evil arise out of it?

Alcib. So it seems to me.

Socrat. Is not an Action comely in that it is Good, and shameful in that it is Evil?

Alcib. That's beyond Contradiction.

Socrat. When you say then that the Succour a Man gives his Friend in a Battle is a comely Action, and at the same time an evil Action, 'tis as if you should say, 'tis Evil tho it be Good.

Alcib. Indeed I think what you say is true. *

Socrat. Then there is nothing comely and honour-

* This Maxim is false in *Alcibiades* his sense, but very true in that of *Socrates*: for nothing can ever spring from a good Action but Good, as nothing but Evil can spring from an evil one.

able which is Evil so far as it is comely and honourable; nor is any thing which is shameful good, so far as it is shameful.

Alcib. So I think.

*Happiness
is always
the fruit of
good Affi-
ons.*

Socrat. Let us seek for another Proof of this Truth. Are not all that do good Actions happy? Can they be happy, unless it be by the Possession of Good? Is not this Possession of Good the fruit of a good Life? And consequently is not Happiness necessarily for them that do good Actions?

Alcib. Who can deny it?

Socrat. * Then Happiness is a comely and honourable thing. Hence it follows that what is comely and what is good are never two different things, as we just now agreed, and that whatsoever we take to be comely, we shall also take to be good; if we look narrowly into it.

Alcib. This is absolutely necessary.

Socrat. What do you say then, is that which is good useful, or not?

Alcib. Yes, it is useful.

Socrat. Do you remember what we said when we spoke of Justice, and about what we agreed?

Alcib. I think we agreed that all Men that do just Actions, must needs do what is comely and honorable.

Socrat. Then that which is comely is good?

Alcib. Yes.

Socrat. Then that which is good is useful?

Alcib. That's certain.

Socrat. And consequently whatsoever 'is just is useful?

Alcib. So it seems.

Socrat. Take good Notice that 'tis your self who affirm these Truths; for I for my part, only ask Questions.

Alcib. I acknowledge it.

Socrat. If any one then thinking he well understood the Nature of Justice should go into the Assembly of the Athenians, or Parthians if you please, (to lay the Scene more remote) and should tell 'em he

* And consequently Happiness can't be the fruit of an ill Life and of ill Actions.

cet-

certainly knows that just Actions are sometimes Evil; would not you laugh at him, who have just now granted and acknowledg'd that Justice and Utility are one and the same thing?

Alcib. I solemnly protest to you *Socrates*, that I know not what I say, nor where I am; for these things appear to me sometimes one way and sometimes another, according as you interrogate me.

Socrat. Don't you know the Cause of this disorder?

Alcib. No, I know nothing at all of it.

Socrat. And if any one should ask you if you have three Eyes or four Hands, do you think you should answer sometimes after one manner and sometimes after another? or would you not answer him always after the same manner?

Alcib. Tho I begin to be diffident of my self, yet I think I should always answer the same thing.

Socrat. And is not this because you know very well you have but two Eyes and two Hands?

Alcib. I think so.

Socrat. Since then you answer so differently whether you will or no about the same thing, 'tis a certain sign that you are ignorant of it.

Alcib. So one would think.

Socrat. You confess then that your thoughts are uncertain and fluctuating about what is just and unjust; honorable or dishonorable, good or evil, useful or the contrary. And is it not evident from hence that this uncertainty springs only from your ignorance?

*Uncertainty
always
comes from
Ignorance.*

Alcib. 'Tis evident.

Socrat. Then 'tis a certain Maxim that the Mind is always fluctuating and uncertain about every thing it does not know?

Alcib. It cannot be otherwise.

Socrat. * But do you know how to mount up to Heaven?

* After he had shown *Alcibiades*, that Ignorance is the cause of all the Errors of Mankind; he goes about to prove to him, that Men ought not to be accus'd of Ignorance in general, for if one kind of it is Evil, there is another kind Good, and this he maintains very solidly.

Alcib.

Alcib. No, I protest.

Socrat. Are you in any doubt, or does your Mind fluctuate about this?

Alcib. Not in the least.

Socrat. Do you know the reason of this, or would you have me tell it you?

Alcib. Tell it me.

Socrat. 'Tis because as you don't know how to mount up to Heaven; so you don't think you know it neither.

Alcib. How is that?

Socrat. Let You and I examine this. When you are ignorant of a thing, and you know you are ignorant of it, are you uncertain and fluctuating about this? For Example, about the Art of Cookery? Don't you know you are ignorant of it? Do you then amuse your self in reasoning about the manner of dressing Meat, and speak sometimes one way, and sometimes another, don't you rather suffer the Cook to take his own way?

Alcib. Yes certainly.

Socrat. And if you were on board a Ship, would you concern your self to give advice to turn the Helm to the right, or left; and when you don't understand the *Art of Navigation*, would you speak about it sometimes after one fashion, and sometimes after another? Would you not rather be quiet, and leave the Pilot to steer?

Alcib. To be sure I should leave that to him.

Socrat. Then you are never fluctuating and uncertain about things you don't know, provided you know that you don't know 'em?

Alcib. So it seems.

Socrat. By this then you very well discern that **+ all the faults we commit proceed only from this sort of ignorance, which makes us think we know that of which we are indeed ignorant.**

Alcib. How do you say?

Socrat. I say that which induces us to attempt a thing is the thought we have that we know how to

do

do it; for when we are convinc'd that we don't know it, we leave it to others. *Alcib.* That is certain.

Socrat. Thus they who are under this last sort of ignorance never commit any fault, because they leave to others the care of such things as they know not how to do themselves.

Alcib. That's true.

Socrat. Who are they then that commit faults? 'Tis not they that know things?

Alcib. No certainly.

Socrat. Seing 'tis neither they that know things, nor they who while they are ignorant of 'em, know that they are ignorant; it necessarily follows that 'tis they who while they are ignorant of 'em, yet think they know 'em: can it be any others?

Alcib. No 'tis only they.

Socrat. Well then this must be the ignorance which is shameful and the Cause of all Evils.

Alcib. True.

Socrat. And when this Ignorance happens to be about things of very great consequence, is it not very pernicious, and very shameful?

Alcib. It cannot be denied.

Socrat. But can you name me any thing that is of greater consequence, than what is just, what is honorable, what is good, and what is useful?

Alcib. No certainly.

Socrat. Is it not about these things that you yourself say you are fluctuating and uncertain? Is not this Uncertainty a sure sign, as we have said already, not only that you are ignorant of these things that are so great and important; but also that while you are ignorant of 'em, you think you know 'em?

Alcib. I am affraid this is but too true.

Socrat. Oh *Alcibiades*! In what a deplorable condition then are you! * I dare not mention it, yet

* He does not mention it immediately. *Alcibiades* is not yet in a condition to bear the horror of it: But he'll mention it at length, when he has dispos'd and prepar'd the young Man to receive this Thunder-clap.

seeing we are alone 'tis necessary I should tell it you. My dear *Alcibiades* you are under a very shameful kind of Ignorance, as appears by your Words, and your own Testimony against your self. And this is the Reason you throw your self with so much precipitancy into the Government ; before you are instructed in what belongs to it. But you are not the only Person who has fallen under this Unhappiness ; 'tis common to you with the greatest part of those who have intermeddled with the Affairs of the Commonwealth. I can except but a small Number. Nay it may be your Tutor *Pericles* is the only Person that is to be exempted.

Alcib. And, *Socrates*, 'tis likewise said, he did not become so accomplished of himself ; but that he had a great deal of Conversation with many great Men, such as *Pythoclides*, and *Anaxagoras* ; and to this very day, as old as he is, he spends whole days with * *Damon*, to inform himself still more and more.

Socrat. † Did you ever see any one, who perfectly knew a thing, and yet could not teach it another ? Your Reading-Master taught you what he knew ; and taught it whom he pleas'd. And you that have learn'd it of him might teach it another. The same may be said of a Musick-Master, and of a Master of Exercises.

Alcib. This is certain.

Socrat. For the best sign that one knows a thing well is to be in a condition to teach it others.

Alcib. So I think.

* This is he of whom *Plutarch* speaks in the Life of *Pericles* ; under the specious Veil of Musick he hid his Profession, which was to teach Politicks. The People perceived this, and banish'd him with the Sentence of the Ostracism.

† Upon what *Alcibiades* had just said, that *Pericles* had render'd himself accomplished by the Conversation of Philosophers and Sophists, *Socrates* would intimate to him, that this Conversation was very useless for the acquiring of Vertue, in which true Accomplishment consists. And this he ingeniously proves by the Example of *Pericles* himself, who had not been able to teach his own Children any thing ; a sure sign that he had learn'd no great Matter of his Sophists.

Socrat.

Socrat. But can you name me any one whom *Pericles* has accomplished? Let's begin with his own Children.

Alcib. What does this prove, *Socrates*, if *Pericles* his Children were Block-heads?

Socrat. And your Brother *Clinias*?

Alcib. A fine Proof indeed! you talk to me of a Fool.

Socrat. If *Clinias* is a Fool, and the Children of *Pericles* were Block-heads; how came it to pass that *Pericles* neglected such good natural Parts as yours, and taught you nothing?

Alcib. I am the only cause of it my self, in not attending at all to what he said to me.

Socrat. But among all the Athenians and Strangers, whether Freemen or Slaves, can you name me one whom the Conversation of *Pericles* has render'd more accomplish'd, as I'll name you a *Pythodorus*, the Son of *Isolochus*, and a *Callias*, the Son of *Calliades*, who became very great Men in *Zeno's* School, at the Expence of a hundred Minas.

About 200l.
Sterling.

Alcib. I can't name you one.

Socrat. * That's very well; but what will you do with your self, *Alcibiades*? will you continue as you are, or will you at last take some care of your self.

Alcib. 'Tis a general Affair, *Socrates*, and concerns me no more than others. For I understand all you say, and agree with you. Yes, all that concern themselves with the Affairs of the Republick, are a Company of ignorant People, excepting a very small number.

Socrat. And what then?

Alcib. If they were Men of great Accomplishments, it would be necessary for one that should pretend to equal, or surpass 'em, to learn, and ex-

This Sentiment of *Alcibiades* is that which still to this day ruins most young Men.

* *Socrates* is not willing now to push on this Question which he has started, whether Vertue may be taught. The Question is too general, and he'll treat of it elsewhere; here he keeps close to his Subject, which is to confound the Pride of *Alcibiades*.

ercise himself, and after that to enter the Lifts as Wrestlers do; but seeing they don't fail to intermeddle with Government, tho' endu'd with very indifferent and common Qualities; what need is there for a Man to give himself so much trouble in Learning and Exercise? I am well assur'd that with the Assistance of Nature alone, I shall excel 'em all.

Socrat. Ah my dear *Alcibiades*, what have you now said? what Sentiment is this so unworthy of that noble Air, and all the other Advantages, which you possess!

Alcib. What do you mean, *Socrates*, when you speak thus?

Socrat. Alas! I am inconsolable, both on your Account, and my own, I have so great an Affection for you, if —————

Alcib. If what?

Socrat. If you think you have only such kind of People to contest with, and to surpass.

Alcib. Whom then would you have me strive to surpass?

Socrat. Again! Is this a Question becoming a Man of a great Spirit?

Alcib. What do you mean? Are not those the only Persons I have to deal with?

An admirable Lesson, which Socrates gives Alcibiades

Socrat. If you were to guide a Man of War, which was to fight in a little time; would you be content if you were more expert in *Navigation*, than all the Sailers you had on board you? Would you not rather propose to your self to acquire all necessary Qualities, and to surpass all the greatest Pilots on the Enemy's side, without measuring your self as you do now with those of your own Party, above whom you should endeavour to raise your self to that Degree, that they should not have so much as a thought of disputing any advantage with you, but finding themselves absolutely inferior to you, should only think of fighting under your Command? These are the Sentiments that should animate you, if you design'd

design'd to do any thing great, and worthy, both of your self, and your Country.

Alcib. Why this is all I design.

Socrat. This must needs be a glorious thing indeed *Alcibiades*, to be a braver Man than our Soldiers! Ought you not rather constantly to set the Generals of our Enemies before your Eyes, that you may excel them in Capacity, and greatness of Courage? and should you not study and labour to this End; always endeavouring to equal the greatest Persons?

Alc. Who then are these great Generals, *Socrates*?

Socrat. Don't you know our City is almost continually in War, either with the Lacedemonians, or with the Great King?

The King of Persia.

Alcib. I know it.

Socrat. If then you think to put your self at the head of the Athenians, you must also prepare your self to receive the Attacks of the † Kings of *Lacedemonia*, and of the King of *Persia*.

† For there were two at a time.

Alcib. You may be in the right.

Socrat. No, Alas! No my dear *Alcibiades*. * You have only to think of excelling a *Midias*, who is so accomplish'd a Man for feeding of Quails, and others of the same Rank, that seek to intrude themselves into the Government, who by their Stupidity and Ignorance shew (as our good Women would say) that they have not yet quitted the Slave, but retain him still under their long Hair; and who with their barbarous Language are come rather to corrupt the City by their servile Flatteries, than to govern it. These are the People you must set before you without thinking of your self; that when you are

* *Plutarch* is of use to make us understand the bitter Satyr, that is hid under these Words, for he informs us that *Alcibiades* applied himself to feed Quails, like this *Midias*, witness that which he let fly out of his Bosom in an open place, and which was caught again by a Master of a Ship, nam'd *Antiochus*, who had the favour of *Alcibiades* ever after, in so much, that he left him the Command of a Fleet in his Absence, which had like to have ruin'd the Affairs of the Athenians.

to engage in such great Battles, you may go, without having ever learn'd any thing of what you ought to know, without being exercis'd at all, without making any preparation, in a word, that without having ever given your self the least trouble, you may go in this Condition to put your self at the head of the Athenians.

Alcib. Socrates, I believe all you say is true. Yet I fancy the Generals of *Lacedemonia*, and of the King of *Persia*, are like other Generals.

Socrat. Ah my dear *Alcibiades*, pray observe what an Opinion that of yours is ?

Alcib. Why so ?

What Socrates is now going to say is one of the finest things Antiquity has left us.

Socrat. In the first place, which of these two Opinions do you think will be most advantageous to you, and will engage you to conduct your self with the greatest Care ; whether to form to your self a great Idea of those Men, which may render 'em formidable, or to take 'em, as you do, for ordinary Men, that have no advantage above you ?

Alcib. Doubtless that of forming to my self a great Idea of 'em.

Socrat. Do you think then 'tis an Evil for you to conduct your self with care ?

Alcib. On the contrary I am persuaded it will be a very great Good.

Socrat. Then this Opinion which you have conceived already appears to be a very great Evil.

Alcib. I confess it.

Socrat. But besides this 'tis false, and I'll presently demonstrate this to you.

Alcib. How so ?

Socrat. Whom do you account the best Men ; those who are of high Birth, or such as are of mean Extraction ?

Alc. Without doubt, those who are of high Birth.

Socrat. And don't you think, they that have had a good Education join'd to their high Birth have every thing that is necessary for the Perfection of Vertue ?

Alcib.

Alcib. That is certain.

Socrat. By comparing therefore our Condition with theirs, let us see first of all if the Kings of *Lacedemonia*, and the King of *Persia* are of meaner Birth than we : Don't we know that the former descend from *Hercules*, and the latter from *Achemenes*, and that *Hercules* and *Achemenes* descend from *Jupiter* ?

Achemenes, the Son of Perseus.

Alcib. And does not our Family, *Socrates*, descend from *Eurysaces*, and does not *Eurysaces* carry his Line up as far as *Jupiter* ?

Socrat. * And does not ours, my dear *Alcibiades*, if you take it that way, descend from *Dedalus* ? and does not *Dedalus* likewise carry us back as far as *Vulcan Jupiter's Son* ? But the difference between them and us is, that they reascend as far as *Jupiter* by a continual Gradation of Kings without any Interruption : The former have been the Kings of *Argos* and *Lacedemonia*, and the latter have always reign'd in *Persia*, and have often possess'd the Throne of *Asia*, as they do now, whereas our Ancestors were only private Persons like us. And if to do Honor to your Ancestors, you were oblig'd to shew *Artaxerxes* the Country of *Eurysaces*, or that of *Eacus*, which is still more remote, what occasion of laughter would you not give him in pointing out to him two little Islands not much bigger than one's hand ? Since then we are oblig'd to give place in point of birth ; let us see if we are not likewise inferior to them in respect of Education. Have you never been told what great Advantages the *Lacedemonian* Kings have in this, whose Wives are kept publickly by the *Ephori*, that they may be certain, as much as 'tis possible, that they produce no Princes but of the Race of *Hercules* ? And the King of *Persia* is so far beyond the Kings of *Lacedemonia* in this respect, that it has never yet been so much as suspected, that the Queen could have a Child that might not be

Egina and Salamina.

* This is a piece of Rallery of *Socrates*, as we shall see when we come to his *Entyphron*.

The First Alcibiades ; or,

the King's Son. Therefore she is not guarded ; all the Guards she has are Terror and Majesty. When she is deliver'd of her first Son, who is to succeed to the Crown ; all the Nations that are spread over that great Emprice celebrate his Birth ; after which that day is annually one of their greatest Festivals ; in all the Provinces of *Asia* there are then nothing but Sacrifices and Feasts ; whereas when we are born, my dear *Alcibiades* ; that Expression of the Comick Poet may be applied to us.

The News scarce to our nearest Neighbours comes. When the young Prince is wean'd he is not left in the hands of Women, but is committed to the Care of the most Vertuous Eunuchs of the Court whose business it is to form and fashion his Body, that he may be brought to the best shape that can be ; and this employ brings them abundance of Honor. When the Prince is seven years old he is put into the hands of the Gentlemen of the Horse who begin to carry him a Hunting : at fourteen years of Age, he comes under the Charge of those who are called the King's Preceptors ; These are the four greatest Lords, and the most accomplish'd Men of all *Persia* ; they are taken in the Vigour of their Age ; one passes for the most Learned, another for the most Just, the third for the Wisest, and the fourth for the most Valiant. The first teaches him the Magick of *Zoroaster* the Son of *Oromazus*, in vvhich is comprehended all the worship of the Gods, he teaches him likewise the Laws of the Kingdom and all the Duties of a good King. The second teaches him all ways to speak the Truth, tho against himself. The third instructs him, not to suffer himself at any time to be overcome by his Passions ; that he may always maintain his Freedom, and his Royalty, in having constantly an absolute Dominion over himself, as well as over his People : And the fourth teaches him not to fear either Dangers, or Death ; because if he should become timorous, from a King he would degenerate into a Slave. Whereas, *Alcibiades*, for your

Zoroaster
was a Ma-
gus, and
King of
Bactriana ;
he wrote
divers Vo-
lumes on
Magick, +
which con-
tained Re-
ligion, Phy-
sick and
Astrology,
he liv'd in
the time of
Ninus, and
of Noah.

your part what Preceptor have you had ? *Pericles* left you in the hands of *Zopyrus* a vile Thracian Slave, who was indeed unfit for every thing besides, because of his old Age. I would here recount to you all the consequent Matters relating to the Education of your Antagonists, but that I should be too long ; and the Specimen I have given you is sufficient to make you easily judg of the rest. * No Person took care of you at your Birth more than of any other Athenian ; no Body takes any pains about your Education ; unless you have some one who concerns himself with it, because he sincerely loves you. *Socrates* And if you consider the Riches of the Persians, the *means him-* Magnificence of their Habits, the prodigious Expence *self.* they make in Perfumes and Essences, the multitude of Slaves that surround 'em, all their Luxury, Finery and Politeness, you'll see your self so little, that you'll be quite ashamed of your self. Will you but cast your Eyes on the Temperance of the Lacedemonians, on their Modesty, easiness, Sweetness, Magnanimity, their good disposition of Mind under all the Accidents of Life, their Valour, Firmness and Constancy in Labours, their Noble Emulation, and love of Glory ? In all these great Qualities you'll find your self a Child in comparison of them. Again, if you would have us take notice of their Riches, and think your self something under this head ; I am willing to speak to it, to make you remember who you are, and whence you came. There is no Comparison between us and the Lacedemonians, they are abundantly more wealthy. Shall any of us dare to compare our Lands with those of *Sparta*, and *Messene* ; which are much larger and better, and maintain an infinite number of Slaves, without counting the *Ilotes* ? Who can number that excellent Race of Horses, and those other sorts of Cattle which feed in

The Qualities of the Lacedemonians.

* 'Tis certain, the Athenians gave their Children no Governors, but Slaves, or such as were enfranchis'd ; this appears by the Greek Comedies, which are left us, and by the Comedies of *Plautus* and *Terence*. *M. Le Fèvre.*

the

the Pastures of *Messene*? whereas we inhabit a dry and barren Countrey : But I pass by all these things. Would you speak of Gold and Silver ? I tell you all *Greece* together has not near so much as *Lacedemonia* alone ; for the Money of all *Greece*, and very often that of the Barbarians too has for several Ages gone into *Lacedemonia*, and never come out again. So that one might very well say, in allusion to what is said by the Fox to the Lion in *Esop's Fables*. *I see the Track of all the Money that is gone into Lacedemonia, but I see no Track that signifies there's any gone out from thence.* 'Tis certain the Commons of *Lacedemonia* are richer than any other Commons in *Greece* : And the Kings are richer than all the rest of the *Lacedemonians* put together ; for these pay their Kings immense Taxes, which extremely augment their Revenues. But if the Wealth of the *Lacedemonians* appears so great in comparison of that of the other Greeks, 'tis nothing when compar'd with that of the King of *Persia*. I heard a Man worthy of Credit, who had been one of the Ambassadors that was sent to that Prince, say, he had travell'd a great way in a very fine and fruitful Countrey, which the Inhabitants call'd *the Queen's Girdle*, that he made another large Journey in another Countrey as pleasant, which they call'd *the Queen's Veil*, and that he pass'd through a great many other fine Provinces, that were destin'd only to furnish that Princess with Clothes, and had their several Names from the things they were to provide. So that if any should go, and say to *Amastris*, the Wife of *Xerxes*, the King's Mother ; *There is at Athens a Citizen whose whole Estate is not above 300 Acres of Land which he possesses in the Town of Erquies, and who is the Son of Dinomache ; whose Clothes and Jewels altogether, are scarce worth fifty Mine ; this Citizen is preparing to make War with your Son.* What do you think she would say ? *This Man founds the Success of his Designs on his Application, Experience, and great Wisdom ; for these are the only things*

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things that make the Greeks esteem'd in the World. But if one should say to her, *This Alcibiades is a young Man, not yet twenty years of Age, who is very ignorant, has no manner of Experience, and who, when a certain Friend of his whom he passionately loves, represents to him, that he ought above all things to cultivate himself, to labour, meditate, to exercise himself; and after having acquir'd the Capacity that is necessary, might engage in War with the great King; will not believe a word of the Matter, and says he's fit enough for this as he is already.* How great would be the wonder of this Princess? Would she not ask; *on what then does this young Giddy-brains depend?* and if we should tell her, *he depends on his Beauty; his fine Shape, his Nobility, and fortunate Birth;* would she not take us for Fools, considering the great Advantages the Kings of *Persia* have in all this above us? But without going any higher, do you think *Lampyto*, the Daughter of *Leotychidas*, the Wife of *Archidamus*, and Mother of *Agis*; who were all born Kings of *Lacedemonia*, would be less astonished, if one should tell her, that as ill educated as you have been, you don't scruple to trouble your head with a design of making War with her Son? Alas! Is it not a horrible shame, that the very Women among our Enemies know better than we what we ought to be to undertake to make War with them with any likelihood of Success? Follow my Advice then, my dear *Alcibiades*, and obey the Precept which is written on the Gate of the Temple of *Delphos*. *Know thy self.* For the Enemies you have to deal with are such as I represent 'em to you, and not such as you imagine 'em to be. The only means of conquering 'em are Application, and Skill: If you renounce these so necessary Qualities, renounce the Glory too, of which you are so passionately ambitious.

Alcib. Can you then explain to me, *Socrates*, how I ought to cultivate my self? for no Man whatever speaks more truly to me than you.

Socrat. I can without doubt, but this does not respect

spect you alone; this concerns us all how many so ever we are. We ought to seek the means of making our selves better; and I speak no more on your Account than on my own, who have no less need of Instruction than you, and have only one advantage above you.

Alcib. What is that?

Socrat. 'Tis this, my Tutor is wiser and better than *Pericles*, who is yours.

God the best
Tutor of
Men.

Alcib. Who is this Tutor of yours?

Socrat. 'Tis God who never permitted me to speak to you before this Day, and 'tis in pursuance of his Inspirations that I now tell you, that you'll never arrive at the Reputation you desire, but by me.

Alcib. You jest, *Socrates*.

Socrat. It may be so. But in fine 'tis still a great Truth, that we have great need to take care of our selves. All Men need this, and we yet more than others.

Alcib. You speak no Untruth, so far as it concerns me, *Socrates*.

Socrat. Nor in what concerns me neither.

Alcib. What shall we do then?

Socrat. Now is the time to throw off Laziness and Softness.

Alcib. 'Tis very true, *Socrates*.

Socrat. Come then, let us examine what it is we would become. Tell me, Would we not render our selves * very good?

Alcib. Yes.

Socrat. In what sort of Vertue?

Alcib. In that Vertue that renders a Man good and fit?

Socrat. For what?

Alcib. For Business.

Socrat. What Business? The managing of a Horse?

* But there are many different sorts of Goodness, and upon this *Socrates* is going to enlarge. For the word *Good* in Greek signifies, Accomplish'd, Excellent, improv'd in any Art or Science, or Vertuous. And the word *Evil*, by the Rule of Contraries, has as many Significations. This Remark is necessary for the understanding of what follows. *M. Le Fevre.*

It can't be that, for that belongs to Querries. Is it Navigation? not that neither, for that belongs to Pilots. What Business is it then?

Alcib. The Business in which our best Athenians are employ'd.

Socrat. What do you mean by our best Athenians? Are they the Prudent or Imprudent?

Alcib. The Prudent.

Soc. So that according to you when a Man is Prudent in any thing, he is good and fit for that thing; and the Imprudent are very bad for it.

Alcib. Without doubt.

Socrat. A Shoe-maker has all the prudence necessary for making of Shoes. And therefore he is good for that.

Alcib. 'Tis right.

Socrat. But he is very Imprudent for making of Clothes, and consequently is a bad Taylor.

Alcib. That's certain.

Socrat. This same Man then is both Good and Bad?

Alcib. So it seems.

Socrat. It follows from this principle that your Athenians whom you call Good and Honest Men are bad too.

Alcib. That is not what I mean.

Socrat. What do you mean then by the good Athenians?

Alcib. They that know how to govern.

Socrat. To govern what? Horses?

Alcib. No.

Socrat. Men?

Alcib. Yes.

Socrat. What sick Men, Pilots, or Mowers?

Alcib. No, none of these.

Socrat. Whom then? Those that do something, or those who do nothing?

Alcib. Those that do something.

Socrat. Those that do what? Endeavour to explain your self and make me understand your meaning.

Alcib. Those that live together, and make use one of another; as we live in Cities.

Socrat.

For the Politicians command the Magistrates and these the rest of the Citizens.

Socrat. According to you then the Good Athenians are such as know how to command such Men as make use of Men.

Alcib. I mean so.

Socrat. Is it those that know how to command the Masters of Gallies who make use of Rowers?

Alcib. No.

The Masters of the Choirs regulated the Musicians, and in their place it was the Players on the Flute.

Soc. Because this belongs to Pilots. Is it then those that know how to command the Players on the Flute who make use of Musicians and Dancers? No doubtless, for this belongs to the Masters of the Choirs.

Alcib. That's certain.

Socrat. What do you mean then by knowing how to command such Men as make use of other Men?

Alcib. I mean 'tis to command Men that live together under the same Laws, and Polity.

Socrat. What is this Art then that teaches to command 'em? If I should ask you what is the Art which teaches to command all the Rowers of the same Vessel, what answer would you give me?

Alcib. That 'tis the Pilot's Art.

Socrat. And if I should ask you what is the Art that teaches to command Musicians and Dancers?

Alcib. I would answer you, 'tis the Art of the Masters of the Choirs.

Soc. How then do you call this Art, which teaches to command those who make the same Politick Body, and live together under the same Government?

Alcib. 'Tis the Art of giving good Counsel.

Socrat. How? What then is the Art of Pilots the Art of giving bad Counsel? Is it not their design to give good?

Alc. Yes certainly to save those that are in the ship.

Soc. You say very well; of what good Counsel then do you speak; and to what does it tend?

Alcib. It tends to preserve the City, and to make it better policied.

Socrat. But what is it that preserves Cities, and makes 'em better policied? What is it that ought or ought not to be in 'em? As if you should ask me what

what it is that ought or ought not to be in a Body to make it sound and in good health; I would immediately answer you, that that which ought to be in it is Health; and that which ought not to be in it is Sicknefs: Don't you think fo as well as I?

Alcib. I think the very fame.

Socrat. And if you should ask me the fame thing of the Eye, I should answer you after the fame manner that the Eye is in a good condition, when it has all that is neceffary for Sight, and when nothing hinders it from feeing. And the very fame of the Ears, that they are very well, when they have every thing they need to hear well, and no difpofition to Deafnefs.

Alcib. True.

Socrat. And now for a City, what is it which by its Prefence or Abfence makes it to be in a better condition, better policied and better govern'd?

Alcib. I think, *Socrates*, 'tis when Amity is well eftablifh'd among the Citizens, and Hatred and Difvifion are banifhed out of the City.

Socrat. What do you call Amity, is it Concord or Difcord?

Alcib. 'Tis Concord certainly.

Socrat. What Art is that which makes Cities accord, for example about Numbers?

Alcib. 'Tis Arithmetick.

Socrat. And is it this that makes particular perfons accord one with another, and each one with himfelf?

Alcib. Without doubt.

Socrat. And how do you call that Art which makes each one agree with himfelf about the length of a Span or Cubit, is it not the Art of Meafuring?

Alcib. Yes doubtlefs.

Socrat. Then Cities and particular perfons accord by means of this Art. And is it not the fame thing about Weight?

Alcib. The very fame.

Socrat. And what is that Concord of which you fpeak, in what does it confift, and what is the Art that

that produces it? Is the Concord of a City the same that makes a particular person accord with himself and others?

Alcib. I think so.

Socrat. What is it? Don't be weary in answering me, but charitably instruct me.

Alcib. I think it is this Amity and Concord, that makes Parents agree with their Children, one Brother with another, and the Wife with her Husband.

Socrat. But do you think a Husband can agree well with his Wife, and that they will accord perfectly about the Tapistry which she works, and he knows not how to make?

Alcib. No, certainly.

Socrat. Nor is there any need of it; for 'tis Women's work. No more is it possible that a Woman should agree with her Husband about the use of Arms; for she knows not what belongs to it: This being a Science which appertains only to Men.

Alcib. 'Tis true.

Socrat. You agree then that there are some Sciences which are destin'd only for Women, and others which are reserv'd for Men.

Alcib. Who can deny it?

Socrat. It is not possible that Women should accord with their Husbands about all these Sciences.

Alcib. That's certain.

Socrat. And consequently there will be no Amity, seeing Amity is nothing but Concord.

Alcib. I am of your mind.

Socrat. So that when a Woman does what she ought to do, she will not be loved by her husband; and when a husband does what he ought to do, he will not be loved by his Wife?

Alcib. This is a certain consequence.

Soc. Then that which make Cities well policied, is not, for every one to follow his own employment in 'em.

Alcib. However *Socrates*, methinks —————

Socrat.

Socrat. How do you say ? Can a City be well policed without having Amity in it, are we not agreed that it is by Amity that a City is well regulated, and that otherwise there is nothing but Disorder and Confusion ?

Alcib. But yet methinks, 'tis this very thing that produces Amity, namely that every one mind his own Business.

Socrat. You said the contrary but just now. But I must endeavour to understand you, what do you say ? That Concord well established produces Amity ? What can there be Concord about things which some know, and others don't understand ?

Alcib. That's impossible.

Socrat. When every one does what he ought to do, does every one do what is just or what is unjust ?

Alcib. A pretty Question ! every one then does what is Just.

Socrat. Hence it follows that when all the Citizens do what is Just, yet they can't love one another.

Alcib. * The consequence is necessary.

Socrat. What then is this Amity or Concord, that can accomplish and make us capable of giving good Counsel ; so that we may be of the Number of those whom you call your best Citizens ? for I can't comprehend what it is, or in whom 'tis to be found. Sometimes 'tis to be found in certain persons, and

* This consequence is very certain : *Alcibiades* acknowledges it, but he does not yet understand the Reason of it. I have given a hint of it in the Argument ; but 'tis fit to explain *Socrates* his thought here at length ; his design is to shew that when Men precisely do only their own business, they only take care of what belongs to themselves ; and so limit themselves to the knowledge of particular things and do not rise up to that of the essence of universal things ; which is the only knowledge that produces Union and Concord, whereas the Knowledge merely of particular things produces Disorder and Division. Therefore to make Concord reign in a state 'tis not enough for every one to take care of what he has ; he must take care of himself too. This care will teach him to love his Neighbour as himself ; and 'tis only this Love, which has God for its Principle, that can produce Concord and Union.

sometimes 'tis not to be found in 'em, as it seems by your Words.

Alcib. Socrates, I solemnly protest to you, I know not what I say my self: And have run a great risque in being a long time in an ill Condition, without perceiving it.

Soc. Don't be discourag'd, *Alcibiades*, if you should not perceive in what Condition you are till you are 50 years of Age, it would be a difficult matter for you to recover your self out of it, and to take care of your self; but now at your years 'tis the fittest time for you to feel your Distemper after the manner you do.

Alcib. But when a Man feels his Distemper what must he do?

Without the
help of God
Men can't
reform.

Socrat. You need only answer to some Questions, *Alcibiades*, which if you do, I hope by the help of God, both you and I shall become better than we are, at least if my Prophecie is to be believ'd.

Alc. If there needs nothing but to answer you to bring it about; I'll promise you your Prophecie shall prove true.

Soc. Come then. What is it to take care of one's self so that when we think we take care of our selves the most, it may not often happen to us without our knowledg to take care of quite another thing? What must a Man do to take care of himself? does he take care of himself, when he takes care of the things that belong to him? *Alcib.* * I think so.

Soc. How? does a Man take care of his feet, when he takes care of the things that belongs to his feet?

Alcib. I don't understand you.

Socrat. Do you know nothing that properly belongs to the hand? To what part of the Body do the Rings appertain, is it not to the Fingers?

Socrat. Yes doubtless.

Soc. And in like manner the Shoes belong to the Feet. *Alcib.* Very true.

* *Alcibiades* answers according to the principles that are almost generally receiv'd. Men think they take care of themselves, when they take care of the things that belong to 'em; but they are grossly mistaken: And *Socrates* is going to confound this Error with great Solidity. That which is mine is not my self. *Soc.*

Socrat. Do we then take care of our Feet, when we take care of our Shoes ?

Alcib. Indeed *Socrates* I don't yet understand you.

Soc. What do you mean then by taking care of a thing ? Is it not to make it better than it was ? What Art is it then that makes our Shoes better ?

Alcib. 'Tis the Shoemaker's Art.

Socrat. 'Tis by the Shoemaker's Art then that we take care of our Shoes : Is it it by the same Art too that we take care of our Feet ; or is it by some other Art that we make our Feet better ?

Alcib. Without doubt that's done by another Art.

Socrat. Don't we make our Feet better by another Art, which meliorates the whole Body ? And is not this the Gymnastick Art ?

Alcib. Yes certainly.

Socrat. 'Tis then by the Gymnastick Art that we take care of our Feet ; and by the Shoemaker's Art, that we take care of the things that belong to our Feet ? 'Tis by the Gymnastick Art we take care of our Hands ; and by the Gold-smith's Art that we take care of the things that belong to our Hands. 'Tis by the Gymnastick Art that we take care of our Bodies ; and by the Weaver's Art, and many other Arts that we take care of the things that appertain to our Bodies.

Alcib. This is beyond all doubt.

Soc. And consequently the Art by which we take care of our selves is not the same with that whereby we take care of the things that belongs to us.

Alcib. So it seems.

Soc. Hence it follows that when you take care of the things that belong to you, you do not take care of your self.

Alcib. That's certain.

Socrat. For 'tis not by the same Art that we take care of our selves, and of the things that belongs to us.

Alcib. I acknowledge it.

Socrat. By what Art is it then that we take care of our selves ;

Alcib. I cannot tell.

In Greece
the Shoe-
makers
mended
Shoes as
well as
made 'em.

For Exer-
cise streng-
thens all
the parts of
the Body.

Socrat. We are already agreed that it is not that by which we can make any of those things that belong to us better : But that by which we can meliorate our selves. *Alcib.* 'Tis true.

Socrat. Can we know the Art of making Shoes better, if we don't first know what a Shoe is ; or the Art of taking care of Rings, if we don't know first what a Ring is ?

Alcib. No that can't be.

S. Can we then know what Art it is that makes us better ; if we don't first know what we our selves are ?

Alcib. 'Tis absolutely impossible.

+ *Socrat.* But is it a very easy thing to know ones self ; and was it some ignorant Person that wrote that Trivial Precept on the Gate of *Apollo's* Temple at *Delphos* ? Or is it on the contrary a thing of great difficulty, and which is not given to every Man ?

Alcib. For my part, *Socrates* ; I have often thought it was given to all Men : and yet it has often seem'd to me to be a thing of very great difficulty.

Soc. But, *Alcibiades* ; Let it be easy or difficult ; 'tis still certain that when once we know it ; we immediately and easily know what care we ought to take of our selves. Whereas while we are ignorant of it ; we shall never come to the knowledg of the Nature of this Care.

Alcib. That is beyond all doubt.

Socrat. Come on then ; by what means shall we find out the * Essence of things to speak universally ? By

* This universal Essence of things, *αὐτοτοαυτὸ*, is the Divine Intelligence, the Eternal Idea, the only cause of Beings, and the singular Essence, *αὐτοῦ κατὰ*, is the thing form'd on this Idea. So that there are two ways of knowing one's self : The first is to know the Divine Intelligence ; and to descend from that to the Soul, by following the designs which the All-wise Creator had in creating it : and the other is simply to know the Soul as a Being different from the Body, and to be convinc'd that that alone is the Man. The first is the most perfect : However *Socrates* leaves this at present ; and applies himself only to the second, which is more easy : but he afterwards resumes it, and from the knowledg of the Soul raises *Alcibiades* to the Consideration of the Eternal Idea, in which alone, as in the true Light a Man may perfectly see his Soul, and all that belongs to it. The whole Argument of *Socrates* is worthy the most solid Theology.

this

this we shall soon find what we are our selves ; and if we are ignorant of this Essence we shall always be ignorant of our selves.

Alcib. You say right.

Socrat. Follow me close then I conjure you in the Name of God : With whom are you now discoursing, is it with some other person or with me ?

Alcib. No 'tis with you.

Soc. And I in like manner discourse with none but You, 'Tis *Socrates* that now speaks, and *Alcibiades* that hears. *Alcib.* True.

Soc. 'Tis by using Words that *Socrates* speaks ; for to speak, and to use words is one and the same thing.

Alcib. 'Tis so without doubt.

Socrat. Are not He who uses a thing, and the Thing which he uses, different ?

Alcib. How do you say ?

Socrat. For Example, a Shoemaker, who uses Knives, Lasts and other Tools, cuts with his Knife and is different from the Knife with which he cuts. A Man that plays on the Harp is not the same thing with the Harp on which he plays.

Alcib. That's certain.

Socrat. This is what I ask'd you just now, whether he that uses a thing, and the thing he uses, always seem to you two different things ?

Alcib. So they seem to me.

Socrat. * But the Shoemaker does not only use his Tools, but his Hands too.

Alcib. That's beyond all doubt.

Socrat. He also uses his Eyes.

Alcib. That's certain.

Socrat. We are agreed that he who uses a thing, is always different from the thing he uses.

Alcib. That is agreed between us.

Soc. So that the Shoemaker and the Harper are some other thing than the Hands and Eyes which they both use.

Alcib. That's plain.

* He designs to prove, that the Body is no less an Instrument of the Soul, than all the other remoter Instruments which it uses.

Socrat. Man uses his Body.

Alcib. Who doubts it ?

Soc. That which uses a thing is different from the thing which is used.

Alcib. Yes.

Soc. Man then is a different thing from his Body ?

Alcib. I believe it.

Socrat. What is Man then ?

Alcib. Indeed, *Socrates*, I can't tell.

Soc. You can at least tell me that Man is that which uses the Body.

Alcib. That's true.

Socrat. Is there any thing that uses the Body besides the Soul ?

Alcib. No nothing else.

Socrat. 'Tis that that governs.

Alcib. Most certainly.

Soc. I believe there's no Man but is forc'd to confess...

Alcib. What ?

Soc. That Man is one of these three things, either the Soul or the Body, or the Compound of 'em both. Now we are agreed that Man is that which commands the Body.

Alcib. That we are.

Soc. What is Man then ? Does the Body command it self ? No. For we have said 'tis the Man that commands that. So that the Body is not the Man.

Alcib. So it seems.

Socrat. Is it then the Compound that commands the Body ? and shall this Compound be the Man ?

Alcib. That may be.

Socrat. Nothing less. For since one of 'em does not command as we have already said, * 'tis impossible they both should command together.

Alcib. 'Tis very true.

Socrat. Seing then neither the Body, nor the Com-

* For besides that this is a Contradiction ; seeing that which does not command would then command ; there is not a third thing for these two to command together. If the Soul and the Body both command, what is it that is under their Command ?

ponnd of Soul and Body are the Man; 'tis absolutely necessary either that Man is Nothing at all, or that the Soul alone is the Man.

Alcib. Most certainly.

Socrat. Shall I demonstrate to you yet more clearly that the Soul alone is the Man?

Alcib. No, I protest; this is sufficiently prov'd.

Socrat. We have not yet founded this Truth with all the Accuracy it deserves; but 'tis sufficiently prov'd, and that may serve. We shall find it farther, and penetrate it better; when we have found out what we just now quitted, because it requir'd a longer Investigation.

Alcib. What is that?

Socrat. 'Tis what we said but now; that 'tis necessary we would first seek to know the very essence of things to speak universally; instead of which we have stop'd to examine and know the Essence of a particular thing; and perhaps that is sufficient. For we can find nothing that is more properly, and precisely our selves than our Souls.

Alcib. That's very certain.

Socrat. So then this is a principle very well establish'd that when you and I converse together, by making use of Discourse; 'tis my Soul that converses with yours. And this is what we said just now, that *Socrates* speaks to *Alcibiades*, by addressing Words not to the Body which is expos'd to my Eyes, but to *Alcibiades* himself, whom I do not see, that is, to his Soul.

Alcib. This is evident.

Socrat. He then who requires us to know our selves, requires us to know our Souls.

Alcib. I believe it.

Socrat. He who knows his Body only, knows that which belongs to him, but does not know himself. Thus a Physician as a Physician, does not know himself, nor a Wrestling-Master as a Wrestling-Master, nor a Husband-Man as a Husband-Man. All persons of these Professions, and those of the like Nature,

are so far from knowing themselves, * that they do not know particularly what belongs to 'em ; and their Art makes 'em adhere to what is yet more forreign to 'em than that which properly belongs to 'em. For they know only those things that appertain to the Body, and by which they cure, and preserve it in health.

Alcib. All this is very true.

Socrat. If therefore it be a piece of Wisdom to know one's self, There is no Man of any of these Professions who is wise by his Art.

Alcib. I am of the same Mind.

Soc. † And 'tis for this reason all these Arts appear vile and sordid, and consequently unworthy of a good Man.

Alcib. 'Tis very true.

Socrat. Well then to return to our Principle, every Man that takes care of his Body, takes care of that which belongs to him, and not of himself.

Alcib. I grant it.

Socrat. Every Man that loves Riches, loves neither himself, nor that which belongs to him, but loves a thing which is yet more forreign to him, *And which only respects that which belongs to him.*

Alcib. I think so.

Socrat. Then according to this principle one may affirm, that he who employs his Care to heap up Riches, does not manage his Affairs well.

*To labour
only to heap
up Treasures
is to manage
one's Affairs
ill.*

Alcib. 'Tis most certainly so.

Socrat. If any one has been in love with the Body of *Alcibiades*, that Person has not been in love with

* Physicians and Masters of Exercise indeed apply themselves to know the Body ; but they know it only to a certain degree: For as *Hippocrates* says in his Treatise of the Ancient Art of Medicine, they content themselves with knowing what Man is, with respect to what he eats and drinks, and to the Exercises he performs: and what may occur to him from any of these things. So that they only know some certain Qualities of Matter, but not the Essence of it. 'Tis more easy to know the Essence of the Soul, than that of the Body.

† The only Art truly worthy of a good Man, is that of knowing, and labouring to perfectionate himself.

Alci.

Alcibiades, but with one of those things that appertain to him.

Alcib. I am convinc'd of it.

Socrat. That Person who is in love with *Alcibiades*, must be one that is in love with his Soul.

Alcib. That's a necessary Consequence of your Principle.

Socrat. And this is the Reason that that Person who only loves your Body, retires when the beauty of this Body begins to decay.

Alcib. 'Tis true.

Socrat. But one that loves your Soul never retires * while you make any progress in Vertue; and every day make your self still a better Man.

Alcib. That is very likely.

Socrat. And this likewise is the reason that I am the only Person that does not leave you, but continue constant after the flower of your Beauty is faded, and all your Admirers are retir'd.

Alcib. You very much oblige me, *Socrates*; and I entreat you not to abandon me.

Socrat. Labour then with all your Might to become every day more and more beautiful.

By beautiful he means virtuous.

Alcib. I'll labour to become so.

Socrat. As Matters stand with you, 'tis easy to judg that *Alcibiades*, the Son of *Clinias*, never had nor has yet more than only one true Lover; and this faithful Lover is the † lovely *Socrates*, the Son of *Sophroniscus* and *Phenareta*.

Alcib. 'Tis very true.

Socrat. But did you not tell me when I met you, that I prevented you but one moment, and that you had a design to speak to me, to know why I was the only Person that had not left you.

Alcib. I told you so, and 'tis true.

Socrat. You now know the reason of it; 'tis be-
* So this Passage ought to be translated. The Latin Interpreters have made a mistake here, not remembering *εως* has often the Signification of the present time. *M. Le Fevre.*

† He jokes on his own deformity and low Birth, which he opposes to the Beauty, fine Air, and Nobility of his Rivals.

cause

More de-
formed, that
is more vi-
cious.

Erethæus
was one of
the first
Kings of
Athens.

cause I always lov'd you, and others only lov'd what belongs to you. The Beauty of that which belongs to you begins to decay, whereas your own Beauty begins to flourish. And if you don't suffer your self to be corrupted by the People, and become more deform'd : I'll not forsake you as long as I live. But I very much fear, since you are so much * in love with the applause of the People, that you'll destroy your self by this unhappy Disposition, as it has been the Lot of a great many of our best Athenians. For the People of the Magnanimous *Erethæus* have a fair outside. But we ought to look into 'em, and remove that fair covering which hides 'em from us. Believe me then, *Alcibiades*, and take the Precautions I give you.

Alcib. What Precautions?

Socrat. To exercise your self, and be instructed in what is necessary to be known before you intermeddle with the Affairs of the Common-wealth; that you may be always fortified with an Antidote; and that you may not perish in so contagious, and fatal a Conversation.

Alcib. All you say is very well, *Socrates*; But endeavour to explain to me, by what means we may be able to take care of our selves.

Socrat. That's done already, for first of all we have prov'd what Man is, and that with good reason; because we fear'd, if that were not well known, we should take care of something quite different from our selves, without perceiving it. We afterwards agreed that we ought to take care of our Souls; that this is the only end we should propose to our selves; and that the care of the Body, and of that which appertains to it, as Riches, should be left to others.

Alcib. Can any one deny this?

* He was so in love with the People, that he did not cease to bestow Gifts on 'em, and to present 'em with Shows and Plays. *Plutarch* speaks of a Distribution of Money, which he made when he was very young, and carried Quails in his Bosom.

Socrat.

Socrat. How can we understand this Truth * more clearly, and evidently? For when we have set it in its true Light, 'tis very certain, that we shall know our selves perfectly well: Let us then in the Name of the Gods endeavour to understand well the Precept of *Delphos*, of which we have already spoken. For *thy self*. we don't yet well comprehend all its Force.

Alcib. What Force? What do you mean?

Socrat. I'm going to communicate to you what I take to be the meaning of that Inscription, and the Precept it includes. 'Tis hardly possible to make you understand it by any other comparison than this, which is taken from the sight. *Alc.* How do you say?

Socrat. Observe well what I say. If this Inscription spoke to the Eye, as it speaks to the Man, and should say to it, *Know thy self*: what should we think it required of it? Should we not think it required it to look upon it self in something in which the Eye might see it self?

Alcib. That's evident.

Soc. Let us then seek for this thing, in which, as we behold our selves in it, we may see both it, and our selves.

Alcib. We may see our selves in a Looking-glass, and in other Bodies of the like kind.

Socrat. You say very well. Is not there likewise some little part of the Eye, which has the same Effect as a Looking-glass?

Alcib. Yes certainly there is.

Socrat. You have observed then, that as often as you look into an Eye, you see your own Image, as in a Glass, in that little part which is call'd by a Name which signifies a † Baby, be-

* *M. Le Fevre* had reason to say, that *ἐναγρέσεια* ought to be read for *ἐναγρέσεται*, and that it should be translated *more clearly*. *Socrates* is now going to resume the Proposition he had quitted, which was to know the universal Essence of things; and all he is going to say on this Subject is incomparably fine.

† There is a fault in the Greek, which I wonder to find left there; for what sense has *κορυφήν* here, which signifies *the top of a thing*? It ought to be read *κόρην* that is the Apple of the Eye. *κόρην*, *pupilla*, a Poppet or Baby.

cause

cause 'tis the Image of him that looks on it.

Alcib. 'Tis true.

Socrat. Then an Eye, that it may see into another Eye, ought to look into this part of it, which is the most beautiful, and which alone has the faculty of seeing.

Alcib. Who doubts it ?

Socrat. For if he should fix his Looks on any other part of the Body of Man, or on any other Object, unless it were like this part of the Eye which sees, it would see nothing of it self.

Alcib. You are in the right.

Socrat. Therefore an Eye that would see it self, ought to look into another Eye, and into that part of the Eye, in which all the Vertue of it resides, that is, the Sight.

Alcib. That's certain.

*In what we
should look
upon our
selves to
know our
selves well.*

Socrat. My dear *Alcibiades*, is it not just so with the Soul ? Ought it not to look into the Soul to see it self, and into that * part of the Soul, in which all its Vertues, that is to say Wisdom is ingenerated ? or else ought it not to behold it self in some other thing yet more noble, which this part of the Soul in some sort resembles ?

Alcib. So methinks, *Socrates*.

Socrat. But can we find any part of the Soul which is more divine than that in which Knowledge and Wisdom reside.

Alcib. No certainly.

* That is into our Intellect or Understanding. We ought strictly to remark with what Wisdom *Socrates* here expresses himself. In speaking of the Soul of Man, he acknowledges, that Wisdom is ingenerated in it, that is, that it comes to it from without ; for it is not its own Light ; this is deriv'd into it from God. And a few Lines lower, as he speaks of the Divine Intelligence, he does not choose to say, in which Knowledge and Wisdom are ingenerated ; but says he, *in which they reside*, because it is Wisdom it self, and the Source of Wisdom. The Latin Interpreters, who did not pry into this Accuracy of *Socrates* have spoiled all the beauty of these Passages by their Translations. More Attention and Fidelity ought to have been used in handling Theological Truths.

Socrat.

Of the Nature of Man.

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Socrat. 'Tis then in this Soul, of which ours is but the Image, 'tis in this divine Soul we ought to behold our selves, and to contemplate the whole Deity in it, that is to say God, and Wisdom; if we would know our selves perfectly.

We must behold our selves in God to know our selves

Alcib. This seems very probable.

Socrat. To know one's self is Wisdom, as we have both agreed.

Alcib. 'Tis true.

Socrat. While we don't know our selves, nor are wise with this Wisdom; we can't know either our Goods or our Evils; for it is not possible that he who knows not *Alcibiades*, should know that what belongs to *Alcibiades*, does indeed appertain to him.

Alcib. 'Tis impossible.

Socrat. 'Tis only by knowing our selves that we come to know that that which belongs to us does indeed appertain to us. And if we know not what belongs to us; neither shall we know what has reference to the things that belong to us.

Alcib. I confess it.

Socrat. We therefore just now did ill to agree, that there are some Persons, who tho' they don't know themselves, yet know that which belongs to them, without knowing the things that appertain to that which belongs to them. For these three Knowledges; to know one's self, to know that which belongs to one; and to know the things that appertain to that which belongs to one, are link'd together, they are the Action of the same Man, and the Effect of one and the same Art.

Alcib. 'Tis very likely.

Socrat. Now that Man that knows not the things that belong to himself neither will know those that belong to others.

Alcib. That's evident.

Socrat. And if he knows not what belongs to others, neither will he know what belongs to the City.

Alcib. That's a certain Consequence.

Socrat. Therefore such a Man can never be a good States

States Man; nay he can't be so much as a Good Master to govern a Family; what do I say? He can't so much as govern himself; for he knows not what he does; and if he knows not what he does, 'tis impossible he should be free from Faults.

Alcib. That is impossible indeed.

Socrat. And if he commits Faults, does he not do ill both in private and in publick? If he does ill, is he not Miserable? and as he is Miserable, does he not involve those that obey him in his Misfortunes?

*The Wicked
can't be happy.*

Alcib. Who can deny it?

Socrat. Then 'tis not possible that he who is neither Good nor Wise, should be Happy.

Alcib. No certainly.

Socrat. Then all vicious Persons are Miserable.

Alcib. I acknowledge it.

Socrat. Then a Man can't deliver himself from his Misery by Riches, but by Wisdom.

Alcib. That's certain.

*The Happiness of Cities
and States
consists in
Vertue.*

Socrat. So that, My Dear *Alcibiades*, Cities have no need either of Walls, or Ships, or Arsenals, or Troops or Grandeur to make 'em happy; the only thing they need is Vertue. And if you would manage the affairs of the Commonwealth well, you must give your Citizens Vertue.

Alcib. This is an evident Truth.

Socrat. But can a Man give that which he has not?

Alcib. How should he?

Socrat. Then you ought first of all to consider how to acquire Vertue; and so must every Man who desires to take care not only of himself, and the things that belong to him; but also of the City, and the things that belong to that.

Alcib. This is beyond all doubt.

Socrat. Therefore you ought not to consider how to acquire for your self or your City a large extent of Empire and the absolute power of doing what you please; but only how to acquire Wisdom and Justice.

Alcib. I believe what you say.

Socrat.

Of the Nature of Man.

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Socrat. For if you and your City govern your selves wisely and justly, you will please God.

Alc. I am well convinc'd of that.

Socrat. And you'll govern your selves wisely and justly, if, as I just now told you, you behold your selves always in the Deity ; in that splendid Light, which alone is capable of giving you the knowledge of the Truth.

Alcib. This seems very reasonable.

Socrat. For while you behold your selves in this Light ; you will see your selves ; and will see and know your True Goods.

Alcib. Without doubt.

Socrat. And so you will always do what is Good.

Alcib. Most certainly.

Soc. If you always do what is good, I dare answer for it, and warrant you, you shall be always happy.

Alcib. Your warrant is very good in this case, *Socrates.*

Socrat. But if you govern your selves unjustly, and instead of beholding the Deity, and True Light you look into that which is without God and full of Darknes, you will do nothing but the Works of Darknes, and such as are full of Impiety ; and it can't be otherwise, because you will not know your self.

Alcib. I am of the same mind.

Socrat. My dear *Alcibiades*, represent to your self a Person that has * a Power to do any thing he pleases, and yet has no Judgment ; what is to be expected from him ? and what Mischief is there that will not befall him ? For example, suppose a sick Man has power to do whatever comes into his Head, has no understanding in Physick ; is in a rage against every Body, so that no Person dares speak to him or restrain him ; what will be the event of this ? He will without doubt destroy his Body, and render himself incurable.

* When Wisdom is wanting, absolute Power always transports Men beyond the Limits of their Duty, and induces 'em to trample Religion and Justice under their Feet.

Alcib.

We can't please God but by Wisdom and Justice.

If we would conduct our selves wisely and justly we must behold our selves in God

Happiness is the certain recompence of good Actions.

Those that look on Darknes do nothing but the works of Darknes.

The terrible effects of absolute Power, when not attended with Wisdom.

Alcib. 'Tis very true.

Socrat. Suppose some Person in a Ship, who has not the Judgment and Skill of a Pilot, should yet have the liberty to do what he thinks fit: You yourself see what must certainly befall him and those that abandon themselves to his Conduct.

Alcib. They must all necessarily perish.

The ruine of Cities and States is certain when Vertue does not reign in 'em.

Socrat. The case is the same with Cities, Republicks, and all States; if destitute of Vertue their Ruine is certain.

Alcib. 'Tis impossible it should be otherwise.

Socrat. Consequently, my dear *Alcibiades*, if you would be happy; your business is not to acquire a large extent of Empire for your self or your Republick; but to acquire Vertue.

Alcib. Very true.

'Tis more advantageous for vicious Persons to obey than command.

Socrat. * And before this Vertue is acquir'd, 'tis better and more advantageous, I don't say for a Child, but for a Man to obey him, who is the most Vertuous, than to command.

Alcib. I am of the same mind.

Soc. And what is best is also most beautiful.

Alcib. Without doubt.

Socrat. That which is most beautiful is likewise most becoming, and suitable.

Alcib. That's beyond dispute.

A vicious Person ought to be a Slave.

Soc. 'Tis then becoming and suitable to a vicious Person to be a Slave, for that is best for him.

Alcib. Most certainly.

The baseness of Vice.

Socrat. Then Vice is a vile thing, and suitable to a Slave.

Alcib. So it seems.

The Nobility of Vertue.

Socrat. And Vertue is a noble thing, and suits only with a free Man:

* After *Socrates* has confounded the Pride of *Alcibiades*, he gives a finishing stroke to lay him low, in reducing him to pronounce this terrible Sentence against himself, that he's only worthy to be a Slave, because he has no Vertue, since 'tis Vertue alone that makes Men free.

Alcib.

Alcib. That can't be contested.

Socrat. Then this Vileness ought to be avoided, which only suites with Slaves.

Alcib. Most certainly, *Socrates*.

Socrat. Well then, my dear *Alcibiades*; do you now perceive in what condition you are? Are you in this noble Disposition of Mind so becoming a Man of your Birth; or ———

Alcib. * Ah, *Socrates*, I perceive very well, I am in the Condition, you speak of.

Socrat. But do you know how to deliver your self out of this Condition, which I dare not name, when I speak of a Man of your make?

Alcib. Yes I do.

Soc. Well, how can you deliver your self?

Alcib. I shall deliver my self, if *Socrates* pleases.

Socrat. You don't say well, *Alcibiades*.

Alcib. What should I say then?

Socrat. You should say, if God pleases.

Alcib. Well then, I say if God pleases; and I add, let us for the future change Persons; you shall personate me, and I you; that is to say, I'll now † make my Court to you, as you have hitherto made yours to me.

Socrat. If so my dear *Alcibiades*, what is reported of the Stork may be said of the love I have for

We can do nothing without the help of God.

* 'Tis upon this, without doubt, that *Plutarch* says, *Alcibiades* struck with the victorious Reasons of *Socrates*, was like a Cock, that after a long fight, hangs the Wing and yields himself conquer'd, and that *Socrates* by his ingenious Discourses touch'd him to the quick, and made him pour out a flood of Tears.

† This Passage is corrupted in the Text. It should be read, *ὡς καὶ σὺ ἐπαιδαγωγῆσθαι, ὥς σὺ ἐμε ἐπαιδαγωγῆσθαι.* I'll be your Pedagogue or Schoolmaster, as you have been mine. We see *Socrates* has been constantly following *Alcibiades* as his Schoolmaster; for the future *Alcibiades* designs to follow *Socrates* in his Turn: but it will be to learn of him and not to teach him. In Greece they had Schoolmasters for their Children, because they went to publick Schools, and there were no private Masters but for Persons of the first Quality; and they made use of 'em but rarely. *M. le Fevre.* In the Translation 'twas requisite to put an equivalent Term, because the Word *Pedagogue* or *Schoolmaster* would not have sounded well.

you ; for after it has hatch'd and nourished a little *Winged Love* in your Bosom ; This little Love shall take his turn to cherish and nourish that in his old Age.

Alcib. It shall so ; and from this day I'll apply myself to Righteousness.

Socrat. I desire you may through the whole course of your Life, persevere in this design * but I confess I fear it very much. Not that I distrust your Good Temper ; but the force of the Examples that reign in this City occasion these apprehensions. I tremble for fear they should be too strong for you and me too.

* The Event prov'd that this fear of *Socrates* was but too well founded. *Alcibiades* with all his good Temper, and with his great Qualities, entirely ruin'd himself, and did a World of mischief to the Athenians. He abandon'd himself to Pleasures ; immers'd himself in Luxury ; and made Spoil on all hands, without any respect to Honour or Decency : and if he did ill in seizing, he did still worse in spending, to furnish matter for his Intemperance and Debauches. Instead of following the Rules of Justice, he govern'd after a licentious manner, full of Dissolution, and mix'd with Treachery and Deceit ; and gave himself up to extravagant Fits of Anger, which occasioned great Mischiefs. All which proceeded from his forsaking *Lyceus*, and forgetting the wise Lessons of *Socrates*. *Alcibiades* his Disease became incurable when he had left this Physician. It seiz'd him like a violent Fever, overturn'd his Understanding, and made him as it were run mad. From *Lyceus* it drove him to the Assembly of the Athenians ; from that Assembly it forc'd him to Sea, from the Sea to *Sicily*, from thence to *Lacedemonia*, from *Lacedemonia* to the *Persians*, from the *Persians* to *Samos*, from *Samos* to *Athens*, from *Athens* again into the *Hellespont* ; and from thence in fine it brought him to be confin'd in a Town of *Phrygia* where he liv'd obscurely in the Embraces of a debauch'd Woman, and was at last miserably kill'd.

THE

The ARGUMENT
OF THE
Second *ALCIBIADES*.

Piet̄y is the only spring of our Happiness, and 'tis Prayer alone that nourishes Piet̄y: By this we keep up a continual Correspondence with God, represent our Necessities to him, and draw down his Favours upon us. So that the Essence of Religion consists in Prayer. For Prayers are properly the Sallies of a Soul penetrated with Piet̄y, discovering its Misery to God, in order to request a Remedy. But our Passions fill our Minds with so much Darknesh, that we know neither our Goods, nor our Evils, but following our own Desires every day offer such Petitions to God, as would be fatal to us, and would become real Curses if God should harken to us. Therefore there is nothing of so great Importance as Prayer; nothing that requires so much Prudence and Attention, and yet we go about nothing with so much Temerity and Negligence. Plato here vigorously opposes this Abuse; and teaches, that if we would pray well we must learn to know our Goods and Evils; that the Knowledge of this is only taught by God; and consequently that 'tis God alone that can dissipate the Darknesh of our Souls, and teach us to pray. Till then we can't safely make any Prayers of our selves, without being expos'd to great Dangers. But are we in the mean time to continue without Prayer, tho we are in continual need of the Divine Assistance? There would be Stupidity or Pride in this kind of Inaction. Certainly it would be more eligible for the Soul to continue in silence, than to ask Evils of God, when she desires to ask Good; but God has given her some help under this Ignorance, in inspiring even during the

time of Darkneſs, a Prayer which teaches us to abandon our ſelves to him, and to requeſt of him, that he would do his own Will in us, and not ours. Of all the Prayers Men are capable of making, this is the moſt agreeable to God, and this Socrates would have men continually make. When God has once enlighten'd and inſtructed us, we ſhall then aſk of him what we think neceſſary; for ſeeing we ſhall ſpeak only by his Spirit we ſhall requeſt of him that which is truly Good, which he is always willing to grant; and will never fail to give it, becauſe he truly loves us. This is what Socrates deſigns to teach in this Dialogue, which may be term'd Sacred; ſince it is full of Maxims, very worthy of Chriſtianity it ſelf; and very uſeful both for Politicks and Religion. As when Socrates ſays, all the Sciences in the World without the Knowledge of that which is very good, are pernicious, inſtead of being uſeful; when he teaches us, that God is not to be corrupted by Bribes, and that he does not regard the Sacrifices, and Offerings of the wicked; but the Righteouſneſs and Holineſs of thoſe that invoke him: And when he aſſures us, that God is free and has a ſovereign Power to hear, or reject our Supplications; whence it follows, that when he hears them, he ſhews us an Act of Grace, and not of ſtrict Juſtice. Here are many other Beauties which may be eaſily remark'd, becauſe they very ſenſibly and obviouſly offer themſelves. This Dialogue is a kind of Continuation of the precedent. As in the former, Alcibiades ſeem'd to underſtand but little with reſpect to humane Affairs; in this he appears to be very ignorant in divine things; for there is ſo great a Connexion between 'em; that thoſe that are ignorant of the one, are neceſſarily ignorant of the other, as Socrates demonſtrates, when he ſhews, that to know God, to know one's ſelf, and to know what appertains to our ſelves, and what to others, is the Effect of one and the ſame Art. We may obſerve by the way, as we have done before; that this Dialogue is ſuſtain'd as all the reſt are, by Action. And this Dramatrick

Air

The Argument of the Second Alcibiades. 229

Air, is that which animates it, and is one of its greatest Beauties.

All that is farther necessary to be known, is at what time Plato supposes it to be made. If we follow his Interpreters, they make him fall into a very ridiculous Inconveniency. For after he had said Archelaus, King of Macedonia was kill'd, he speaks of Pericles as of a Person yet alive, contrary to what is certainly known, namely, that Archelaus surviv'd Pericles, and was not assassinated till Twenty years after his Death; and contrary to what Plato himself says, in his Gorgias and Theages. We shall see in the Notes what led Plato's Interpreters into this Mistake. In the mean time it may be maintain'd, that Socrates held these Discourses with Alcibiades, the first year of the 93 Olympiade; for Perdiccas reign'd 13 years after the death of Pericles, who died the last year of the 87 Olympiade. Archelaus, who kill'd Perdiccas, reign'd seven years, and then was kill'd the last year of the 92 Olympiade. This naturally leads us to the time of this Dialogue. They that make Archelaus to have reign'd 16 Years, or Perdiccas 23, make Archelaus survive Alcibiades and Socrates.

This Dialogue is of the same Character with the precedent, *μαυτινός*, that is, Socrates here makes Alcibiades find out the Truths which he designs to teach him. 'Tis also a Moral Dialogue, as well as the former.

T H E
Second *ALCIBIADES*,
O R
Of Prayer.

Socrates, Alcibiades.

Socrates. **A** *Lcibiades*, are you going into this Temple to say your Prayers?

Alcib. Yes *Socrates*, that is my design.

Socrat. Indeed you seem very thoughtful; I see your Eyes are fix'd on the Ground like a Man that's thinking on some very serious Matter.

Alcib. What should I think on, *Socrates*?

Socrat. What should you think on? on some very important thing, I suppose; for I beseech you in the Name of God, tell me, whether when we address our Prayers to the Gods, either in publick or private, do they not grant us some things, and refuse us others? do they not hear some Persons, and reject others?

Alc. That's very true.

Socrat. Don't you think then, that Prayer requires a great deal of Precaution and Prudence, lest before we are aware we ask the Gods great Evils, while we think we are requesting what is good; and lest they should be dispos'd to grant what is requested of 'em; as they granted *Oedipus*, his Petition, who pray'd that his Children might decide their Rights by the Sword. This unhappy Father, who might have pray'd to the Gods to remove from him the Mischiefs that oppress'd him, drew new Miseries on him.

Prayer requires a great deal of Wisdom and Prudence.

himself by his horrible Imprecations; for his Petitions were heard, and this prov'd a source of terrible Calamities to his Family, the particulars of which I need not relate to you.

Alcib. But *Socrates*, you tell me of a Mad Man, can you believe any Man in his Senses would have made such kind of Prayers?

Soc. Then to be mad you think is oppos'd to being wise.

Alcib. Most certainly.

Socrat. Don't you think, that some Men are Fools, and others Wise?

Alcib. Yes.

Socrat. Come then, let us endeavour to know and distinguish 'em well; for you agree that there are some that are foolish, others that are wise, and others that are mad.

Alcib. I do so.

Soc. Are not some People in health, and others sick?

Alcib. That's certain.

Socrat. These are not the same Persons.

Alcib. No certainly.

Socrat. Is there a third sort, who are neither sick nor in health?

Alcib. * No. That can't be.

Socrat. For a Man must necessarily be in health or sick, there is no Medium.

Alcib. So I think.

Socrat. But is it the same thing with respect to Wisdom and Folly in your opinion?

Alcib. How do you say?

Socrat. I ask you if a Man must necessarily be either foolish or wise; or is there a certain Medium which makes one become neither a wise Man nor a Fool?

* If one were dispos'd to Criticize, one might say, there is a third state which is that of Convalescence, in which Men have not yet recover'd Health, neither are properly sick. But at bottom, this is not true, for one who is recovering is no longer under the Power of Sickness, but is in the way of Health.

Alcib. * No. There's no Medium.

Socrat. Then One must necessarily be one or t'other.

Alcib. So I think.

Socrat. Did you not just now grant that Madnes is opposite to Wisdom ?

Alcib. Yes.

Socrat. And that there is no Medium, to put a Man into such a Condition as to be neither wise nor foolish ?

Alcib. I did grant it.

Socrat. But is it possible for the same thing to have two Contraries oppos'd to it ?

Alcib. By no means.

Socrat. Then Folly and Madnes will appear to be one and the same thing.

Alcib. So methinks.

Socrat. Then if we say all Fools are mad, we shall say right.

Alcib. Certainly.

Socrat. Without going any farther ; Among all the Men of your Age, if there are any Fools, as without doubt there are, and some of a longer standing, (for, I pray, don't you find wise Men are very rare in this City and Fools very numerous) would you call these Fools mad ?

Alcib. Without any Scruple.

Socrat. But do you think we should be very safe among so many mad Men ; and that we should not before now have born the punishment of such Conversation ; in suffering from 'em whatever might be expected from mad Men ? Have a care what you say,

The Difficulty which Socrates opposes to what Alcibiades has just granted.

* To this 'tis objected, that there is a certain *Medium* between Vertue and Vice, which is the State of such as are, neither vicious, nor vertuous, as *Tacitus* says of *Galba*, *magis extra Vitia quam cum Virtutibus*. But 'tis easy to see, that this Expression of *Tacitus* is not true, but only in the common Language of the World, which makes only a superficial Judgment, without penetrating deeply into things, and so calls none vicious but those who practise gross Vices ; and is false, when we speak with a Philosophick Accuracy. Wherever Vertue is not, there Vice must necessarily be. The same may be said of Wisdom and Folly. Every Man who is not Wise, can be no other than a Fool.

there-

therefore, my dear *Alcibiades* ; lest this matter be otherwise than you pretend.

Alcib. Well then how is it ? for I perceive it may be otherwise than I say.

Socrat. I think so too ; and we must examine the Matter after this Manner. *Alc.* After what Manner ?

Socrat. I'm going to tell you ; Some Persons are sick, are they not ? *Alcib.* Who doubts it ?

Socrat. Is it absolutely necessary, that every one that is sick, should have the Gout or Fever, or sore Eyes ? and don't you think he may be free from all these Distempers and yet be sick of another Disease ? For there are divers kinds of Diseases, besides these. *A Solution of this difficulty.*

Alcib. So I think.

Socrat. You believe every Distemper of the Eyes is a Disease, but you don't think every Disease is a Distemper of the Eyes.

Alc. No certainly, but yet I don't see what that proves.

Socrat. But if you'll follow me, I am perswaded, we shall find that presently. *You know that Saying of the Poet* * Two Men that go together.

Alcib. I follow you with all my might, *Socrates.*

Socrat. Are we not agreed that every Distemper of the Eyes is a Disease, and that every Disease is not a Distemper of the Eyes ?

* *Plato* often intermixes Sentences of the Poets in his Discourses without giving any notice when he does it. To understand this Passage well, and to know all its Elegancy ; 'tis necessary to remember the Words *Homer* puts into *Diomedes* his Mouth, when *Nestor* proposes to send Spies into the *Trojan Camp*. For he speaks thus, *My Courage prompts me to go into the Enemies Army, but if any one would accompany me, I should go with greater Boldness and Confidence ; for two Men that go together, take a better view of things, one sees what the other does not observe : One Man alone, tho he want not Prudence, yet has always less Vigour and Activity in his Mind.* *Iliad.* K. ver. 224. So that here is a manifest Allusion to this Passage. *Homer* says οὐτε δὲ ἐρχόμενα, *Two Men that go together.* And *Plato* says οὐτε δύο σκοποῦμενα, *Two Men that examine together.* But because *Homer* is not now so well known as he was in *Plato's* time, I have elucidated the Passage in the Translation, by adding, *you know that Saying of the Poet.* Without which the Allusion would not have been perceivable. The Latin Translators have slip'd over it without perceiving it.

Alcib.

Alcib. In that we are agreed.

Soc. And that with good Reason; for all that have a Fever are sick; but all that are sick, have not a Fever, or the Gout, or sore Eyes. All these Afflictions are Diseases, but Physicians assure us that they are so many different Diseases by their Effects; for they are not all alike; and they don't deal with them all after the same manner; but according to the Nature and Violence of 'em. Are there not a great many sorts of Artificers? There are Shoemakers, Bricklayers, Architects, Carvers, Painters, and a multitude of others, whom I need not name; work is divided among 'em. They are all Artificers, but they are not all Carvers or Architects. *Alcib.* 'Tis true.

Folly is divided among Men, as Labour and Industry is shar'd among 'em.

Socrat. In like manner Folly is divided among Men, those that have the greatest share of it we call mad, or distracted. Those that have a degree less we call Fools, and Stupid; but while Men seek to hide these Vices under honourable and specious Names; they call the former Men of Magnanimity, and Courage; and they call the others Men of Simplicity; or else they say they have no harm in 'em; but have little Experience, and much Youth. You'll find a great many other Names besides these with which they palliate their weak side. But these are so many sorts of Folly, which differ only as one Art does from another, and one Disease from another. Don't you think so as well as I?

Alcib. I am of the same mind with you.

Socrat. To return then to our Subject; Our first design was exactly to know and distinguish the Foolish from the Wise; for we agreed that some Men are Wise and others Foolish, did we not?

Alcib. Yes, in that we agreed.

Socrat. Don't you call him wise who knows what he ought to say or do, and him foolish who knows neither one nor t'other? *Alc.* Yes certainly.

Socrat. Are they, who know not what they ought to say or do, ignorant that they say and do what they ought not?

The definition of a Wise Man and a Fool.

Alcib.

Alcib. I think so.

Socrat. I told you *Oedipus* was of that number : But you'll yet find in our time a multitude of People, who without being transported with an Emotion of Anger like him will request of God real Evils while they think they are asking real Goods. For as for *Oedipus* ; if he did not ask for what was Good neither did he think he ask'd it ; whereas others every day do the quite contrary ; and without going any farther, *Alcibiades*, if the God to whom you are going to pray, should appear suddenly to you, and before you have open'd your Lips should ask you, if you would be content to be the Tyrant of *Athens*, or (if that seem too little for you) of all *Greece* ; or if you were not yet satisfied, should promise you all *Europe* together ; and fully to gratify your Ambition, should add, that that very day all the World should know that *Alcibiades* the Son of *Clinias* is King ; I am perswaded you would go out of the Temple with abundance of Joy, as one that has just received the greatest of all Goods.

Alcib. And, *Socrates*, I verily believe, there's no Man but he would be transported with Joy, if the same thing should happen to him.

Socrat. But you would not give your Life for the Empire of the *Greeks*, nor for that of the *Barbarians*.

Alcib. No certainly ; to what purpose ? for then I could not enjoy that Empire.

Socrat. But suppose you could enjoy it, would you do it, if this Enjoyment were to be fatal to you ?

Alcib. No, neither would I do it, on that Condition.

Socrat. Then by this you see very well, that it is not safe to accept, or desire what one does not know ; if it be true, that it may bring great Mischiefs upon us, or even make us lose our Lives : For I could name to you a great many of those Ambitious Men, who having passionately desir'd the Tyranny, and spar'd nothing to obtain it, as the

There is a great deal of danger in asking and receiving what we know not.

greatest

greatest of all Goods ; yet have deriv'd no other Advantage from this great Elevation, than to be expos'd to the Stratagems of their Enemies, who have assassinated them on the Throne. 'Tis impossible but you must have heard of that Tragical Story that has lately happen'd. * *Archelaus*, the King of *Macedonia* had a Favorite whom he lov'd with an unbounded Passion ; this Favorite, who was yet more in love with the Throne of *Archelaus*, than this Prince was with him, kill'd him to fill up his place, flattering himself that he should be the happiest Man in the World : But he had scarce enjoy'd the Tyranny 3 or 4 days, when he was cut off by others that were possess'd with the same Ambition. And among our Athenians (for these are Examples which come not to us by hear-say ; but such as we have seen with our Eyes) how many have there been, who, after they had ardently aspir'd to be Generals of the Army, and had obtain'd what they desir'd, have been put to death, or banish'd ? How many others who have seem'd more happy, have pass'd through innumerable Dangers, and been expos'd to continual Fears, not only during the time of their being Generals, but also after their return into their Country, where they have all their Life-time had a more cruel Siege to maintain against envious Detractors, than all those they sustain'd in War against the Enemies of the State ? So that the greatest part of 'em wish'd they had never been any more than private Men, rather than to have had the Command of Armies at so dear a rate. If all these Dangers and Fatigues would produce a Man any advantage in the end ; there would be some reason for him to to expose himself to 'em, but 'tis the quite contrary. What I say of Honours, I say also of Children. How many People have we seen, who after they

* *Archelaus* was the natural Son of *Perdiccas*. He kill'd his Father, his Uncle *Alcetas* and his Son. He afterwards kill'd the Legitimate Son of *Perdiccas* ; and after he had possess'd the Throne 7 years, was assassinated by his Favorite *Craterus*.

have importunately desir'd of God, that he would give them Children, and have accordingly obtain'd 'em, have by this means precipitated themselves into terrible Miseries and Troubles : For some of 'em have spent their whole Life in Sorrow and Bitterness ; because their Children have prov'd wicked ; and others who have had such as have prov'd good have been no more happy than the former, becaule they have lost them for the most part in the Flower of their Age : So that they had much rather never have had 'em. Now tho all these Miseries, and many others, are very obvious, and common ; yet there's scarce a Man to be found, who would refuse these false Goods, if God should give 'em him ; or who would cease to importune him for 'em, if he were assur'd he should obtain 'em by his Prayers. The generality of Men would not refuse, either the Tyranny, or the Command of Armies, or any other great Honours, which yet are certainly much more pernicious than useful ; but would request 'em of God, if they did not spontaneously offer themselves to 'em. But wait a moment, and you'll hear 'em sing a *Palinodia*, and offer Petitions quite contrary to the former. For my part, I confess, I can't choose but think, that Men are really to blame, *in complaining of the Gods, and accusing 'em of being the Cause of the Miseries they suffer ; for 'tis themselves, who by their Faults, or rather by their Follies,*

In spite of Fate draw Mischiefs on themselves. And therefore, *Alcibiades*, that Ancient Poet seems to me to have had a great deal of Sense and Reason, who having (as I think) very imprudent Friends, whom he saw every day going on in a Course of asking of God such things as seem'd good to them, and yet were very bad for 'em, compos'd for 'em this Prayer, and gave it 'em. *Great God, give us the Good Things that are necessary for us, whether we ask 'em or not ; and keep evil things from us, even when we ask 'em of thee.* This seems to be a most Excellent and very safe Prayer. If you have any

A Recantation.

This is a Passage of Homer, in the 1st Book of his Odyss. at the beginning.

An admirable Prayer of an unknown Author.

thing to object against it, do not hide it from me.

Alcib. 'Tis hard to contradict what is well spoken. The only reflection I make on it, *Socrates*, Is how many Evils are brought upon Mankind by Ignorance. For we don't so much as perceive that 'tis this that not only makes us every day do such things as are fatal to us; but (which is most deplorable) engages us to ask our own unhappiness of God; and this is what no Man can tell how to imagine. There's no Person but thinks himself capable of asking such things of God, as are very useful for him, and very incapable of desiring such as are pernicious to him; for this would not be a Prayer, but a real Imprecation.

Socrat. Hold a little, my dear *Alcibiades*, 'tis possible there may be found some Person wiser than you and I, who might with good Reason reprehend us, and tell us we are very much in the wrong thus to blame Ignorance, without adding what sort of Ignorance it is that we condemn, and in what it consists. For if Ignorance is bad in some things, 'tis good in others.

*Ignorance is
sometimes
good.*

Alcib. How do you say, *Socrates*, is there any thing of what kind soever of which 'tis more useful to be ignorant, than to know it?

Socrat. So I think, and you think otherwise.

Alcib. That I do I protest.

Socrat. Yet I shall never believe you capable of being irritated against your Mother with the fury either of an *Orestes*, or an *Alcmaeon*, or any the like *Parricides*; if there have been any others who have committed the same Crimes.

Alcib. Ah! *Socrates*, I intreat you in the Name of God alter your discourse.

Socrat. *Alcibiades*, you are to blame to desire that of me, of me, I say, who tell you, I don't think you capable of committing those Crimes. You could do no more if I accus'd you of 'em. But since these Actions appear so abominable to you, that one must not name 'em unless there be an absolute necessity of it; with all my heart, so let it be. I on-
ly

ly ask you, do you think, if *Orestes* had been in his Senses, and had known what was good, and useful for him, he would have dar'd to do what he did?

Alcib. No certainly.

Socrat. Neither he nor any body else would have done it.

Alcib. That's most certain.

Socrat. Then in my Opinion this Ignorance of what is good and useful is a great Evil.

Alcib. I am of the same Mind.

Socrat. And that either in *Orestes*, or any other Person.

Alcib. I am fully persuaded of that.

Socrat. Let us examine this matter yet a little farther. Suppose then * it had formerly come into your Head on a sudden, that it was a very good and laudable Action for you to go and kill *Pericles* your Tutor and Friend; and that you had taken a Dagger, and gone directly to his Door, to ask if he were at Home, as having a design against him alone, and not any other; and that you had been told he was within. I don't mean by this that you could ever have been capable of committing so horrible an Action;

* The Latin Interpreters have translated this Passage, as if *Plato* had said, if it should come into your head of a sudden, to go and kill *Pericles* your Tutor and Friend, not considering that they make *Plato* fall into a very ridiculous Fault. For to speak thus, *Pericles* must have been still living. And *Plato* had been saying, that *Archelaus*, King of *Macedonia*, had been assassinated, and we know *Pericles* died 20 years before. How then shall this Contradiction be reconcil'd? How shall we secure *Plato* from this Fault of which he is not guilty: seeing he speaks the contrary in *Gorgias* and *Theages*? There's no great difficulty in the Matter, 'tis only to translate as the Greek Terms will bear; if it had formerly come into your head on a sudden, that is, if while *Pericles* was living, &c. By this means we not only prevent a great mistake, in regard of the time, but also escape a great Fault against the Rules of Decency. For that *Pericles* should be yet alive when *Socrates* speaks thus to *Alcibiades*, is a hard and odious Supposition; but supposing *Pericles* to be dead, it has not the same harshness in it. *Athenius* would not have forgot to improve this Passage to strengthen his Chicanerie against *Plato's Gorgias*, if he had not very well understood that it would bear another Interpretation besides that given it by his Translators.

but

but I make this Supposition to shew you that there's nothing hinders, but a Man who knows not what is comely and honourable may be in a disposition of taking that for very Good, which is in it self very Evil ; Don't you think so as well as I ?

Alcib. I am perfectly of the same Mind.

Socrat. To go on then ; supposing you had been told *Pericles* was at Home, and you had gone in, and seen him, but not known him, and imagined that you saw some body else ; would you have had the Boldness to kill him ? No certainly, for your design would have been only against him ; and every time you had been at his House on the same Design, and had mistaken him for another, you would not have done him the least Injury.

Alcib. That's very certain.

Socrat. What then ? Do you think *Orestes* would have laid his Parricidal Hands on his Mother, if he had mistaken her for another ?

Alcib. No doubtless.

Socrat. For he did not design to kill the first Woman he met, nor the Mother of this or that Person ; but had a mind to kill his own Mother.

Alcib. You say right.

Socrat. Then this sort of Ignorance is very good for those that are in such a disposition of mind as his, and have such kind of Fancies in their Heads.

Alcib. So I think.

Socrat. By this then you plainly see, that on some Occasions, and in some Persons whose Minds are dispos'd after a certain manner, Ignorance is a Good and not an Evil, as you just now suppos'd.

Alcib. I perceive it very well.

Socrat. If you will take the pains to examine what I am now going to say, how strange soever it may at first seem to you, it may be you'll be of the same mind with me.

Alcib. Well, *Socrates*, What is it ?

Socrat. 'Tis true, that possibly all the * Sciences without the knowledg of that which is very good, are

* All the Sciences are useless without the knowledge of that which is very good.

are seldom of use to those that possess 'em, nay most commonly are pernicious to 'em. Follow me a little in your Thoughts, I entreat you. When we are about to say or do any thing; Is it not altogether necessary, either that we really know what we are going to do or say, or at least that we think we know it?

Alcib. Without doubt.

Socrat. According to this Principle the Orators who every Day advise the People, give them advice about what they know, or at least think they know. Some give 'em counsel about Peace and War, others about the Walls that ought to be built, about the Fortifications, Gates, and Arsenals. In a word, all, that the City does for it self, or against another City, is not done but by the advice of Orators.

Alcib. 'Tis true.

Socrat. Observe well what follows; and see if I can finish my proof: Don't you divide the People into wise Men and Fools? *Alcib.* Yes.

Socrat. Don't you call the greatest number Fools; and the least wise Men? *Alcib.* Yes.

Socrat. Is it not with reference to something that you call 'em so?

Alcib. Most certainly.

Socrat. Do you then call him a wise Man who can give this Counsel without knowing what is best, or in what time it is best?

Alcib. No certainly.

Socrat. Nor do you call him wise, who can make War, but knows not when nor how, nor how long 'tis best so to do.

Alcib. No, not I.

Socrat. Neither do you call those Magistrates wise, who know how to put to death, to fine, and to banish; and yet know not when or on what Occasions these punishments are best and most just.

Alcib. No indeed.

Socrat. Well then, when any one knows well how to do all these things, and these Sciences are accompanied with the knowledge of that which is very
R good;

good (and this is the same with the knowledge of that which is very useful, as you have granted) we call this Man wise, and say he is very capable to advise and conduct himself, and govern the Commonwealth. And we say directly the contrary of him who does not add the knowledge of that which is good to these Sciences.

He is going to prove that to be skilful in the Art a Man professes is not sufficient to merit the name of a wise Man.

Alcib. This must be granted.

Socr. When a Man knows how to mount a Horse, to draw a Bow, to Wrestle, in a word to perform any of the like Exercises; or is well instructed in any other Art, how do you call him, when he knows perfectly well what is most conformable to the Art he professes? Don't you call him a Querry that employs himself in managing of Horses, him Wrestler that makes it his business to Wrestle, and him a Musician who understands Musick, and so of the rest? Don't you give 'em all such Names as are deriv'd from their Art, and are suitable to it? or do you give them other Appellations?

Alcib. We give 'em only such Names as are taken from their Art.

Socrat. Do you think 'tis of absolute necessity that he who well understands the Art of which he makes Profession, should also be a wise Man; or shall we say he may be far from that Character?

Alcib. He may be very far from it *Socrates*.

Socrat. * What will you say of a *Republick* compos'd of Wrestlers, Pipers, Archers, and other such kind of People mingled with such Persons as we have been speaking of, some of whom know how to make War, others to condemn to Death; and with those States-Men, who are bloated with pride on the Account of their pretended Capacity in Politicks? Supposing all these People to have knowledge of what is very good, and that there is but one single

* This is a subtle Satyr against the Republick of the *Athenians*, in which all Arts and Sciences were seen to flourish, but the knowledge of what is very good was not to be found there; and therefore nothing but Confusion and Disorder was to be seen among 'em.
Man

Man among 'em all who knows either on what Occasion or with whom each of these different Arts ought to be used?

Alcib. I should say, *Socrates*, that would be a very ill-compos'd Commonwealth.

Socrat. Much more would you say so, when you saw every one full of Ambition, and striving to engross the greatest part of Affairs to himself; that he might still exceed himself, and become every Day more powerful in that part of the Government which is the most Noble; and if you should at the same time see every one making horrible Mistakes against the knowledge of what is very good, both on his own account and that of the Commonwealth; because he conducts himself by Opinion without Understanding. This being the State of the case, should we not have great Reason to say that such a *Republick* can't choose but be full of Disorder and Injustice?

Alcib. This is manifestly true.

Socrat. Have we not agreed that it is absolutely necessary for us either to believe we know, or else really to know what we are about to do or say without any farther Deliberation?

Alcib. That has been agreed between us.

Socrat. * Have we not likewise acknowledged, that when any Man does that which he knows, or thinks he knows; provided he possesses the knowledge of that which is very good, great advantage hence accrues both to himself and to the State.

Alcib. Who can doubt that?

Socrat. And that when 'tis otherwise, the contrary ensues.

Alcib. That's evident.

Soc. Do you still persist in the same Sentiments?

Alcib. I do.

Socrat. Have you not said, that the greatest number is that of Fools, and that of wise Men the least?

Alcib. Yes, and I say the same still.

* The knowledge of that which is very good conducts and directs us not only in the things we know, but also in those we know not.

Socrat. Did we not upon this say, that the greatest number keep at a distance from that which is good, because they usually abandon themselves to Opinion without Understanding.

Alcib. Yes, so we said.

Socrat. Then 'tis useful for this great number to know nothing, and to believe they know nothing, because what they know, or believe they know they will be willing to put in Execution, and in so doing, instead of gaining any advantage, they will receive great prejudice. *Alcib.* You say true.

Soc. By this then you see very well, that I had reason when I told you just now, that possibly all Sciences, without the knowledge of what is very good, were seldom useful to those that possess'd 'em, but were most commonly very pernicious to 'em. Were you not then sensible of this Truth ?

Alcib. I was not then sensible of it, *Socrates*, but now I am.

Socrat. Then a City which would be well govern'd and a Soul that would live well applies it self only to this Science ; as a Sick Man commits himself to his Physician ; and as a Sailer, that would arrive safe at his Port, obeys his Pilot. * Without this the greater Fortune, Men or States enjoy, the

* This is one of the most difficult places in *Plato* ; *Marsilius Ficinus*, and *De Serres* have translated it very ill, and have rather obscur'd than interpreted it. However *Ficinus* suspected that it was corrupted, tho he could not correct it. I am of opinion that we should read $\mu\epsilon\nu$ for $\mu\eta$, and $\gamma\epsilon$ for $\gamma\delta$. But that is not all, the principal Fault in the Text consists in the Word $\iota\upsilon\chi\eta\varsigma$ which makes a very ill Sense, we must therefore necessarily read $\pi\acute{\upsilon}\chi\eta\varsigma$, and take away the Point. *Plato's* Sense is, that without the knowledge of what is very good, the greater Fortune a Soul or a City enjoys, the greater Crimes will they commit to satiate their Passions. The Corruption came from the Word $\iota\upsilon\chi\eta\iota$ which is 3 or 4 Lines higher. But *Plato* speaks no more of the Soul than he does of the City, and consequently could not repeat $\iota\upsilon\chi\eta\varsigma$. He certainly wrote $\pi\acute{\upsilon}\chi\eta\varsigma$, and this mode of Speech $\epsilon\tau\epsilon\rho\iota\sigma\iota\omega\tau\epsilon\tau\epsilon\tau\iota\varsigma\ \pi\acute{\upsilon}\chi\eta\varsigma$ is very elegant, *quo magis fortuna afflaverit*, properly, the more Fortune blows on their Poop. The Beauty of this Principle, and the Truth which it contains, prove the necessity of restoring the Sense after this manner ; The greater Fortune wicked Men have, the greater Sins do they commit.

great-

greater Crimes will they commit, either to acquire Riches, or to augment their Power, or satiate their Passions. He that possesses all the Arts and Sciences, and is destitute of this, will be driven about and toss'd by each of them, and be really batter'd with a furious Tempest; and having neither Helm nor Pilot, 'tis impossible he should go very far, and his ruine must needs be near. Methinks what the Poet speaks of one whom he would dispraise may be applied to him. * *He knew* (says he) *many things, but knew 'em all amiss.*

The more prosperous Men are the greater Crimes they commit, if they have not the knowledg of what is very good.

Alcib. How can one make such an application as this, *Socrates*? for my part, I don't think there is any Justness in it.

Socrat. On the contrary I say there is a great deal of Justness in it. For my dear *Alcibiades*, 'tis a sort of Enigma. *Homer* and the other Poets are full of 'em. For all Poesie is naturally enigmatick, and 'tis not given to every Man to penetrate those Obscurities; and if besides its being Enigmatick, it be handled by envious Poets, who instead of discovering their Wisdom to us, only seek to hide it from us; 'tis then almost impossible to sound their Thoughts. But you'll never accuse *Homer* that most Wise, and Divine Poet of being ignorant that 'tis impossible to know amiss what one knows; 'tis he that says of *Margites*, that † *he knew many things but knew 'em all amiss*, and he speaks enigmatically, for he puts [*he knew*] for *his Learning* and [*amiss*] for *unhappy*; which terms could not well enter into the Composition of his Verse; but what he certainly meant by

All Poesie is Enigmatick.

* Or thus, To a great Sum his Knowledg did amount,
But all he knew turn'd to an ill Account.

† *Homer* made a Poem against one *Margites*, who knew much, and yet spent his Life in Idleness and Debauchery, a certain sign that he did not possess the knowledg of what is very good. This Poem which was made up of a mixture of Heroick and Iambick Verses is lost: In which *Homer* turn'd the pungent Railleries of those Satyrical Pieces which were in vogue before him into pleasant Stories and Jest; and by this means was the first that gave us any strokes of Comedy: See the 4th Chapter of *Aristotle* of the Art of Poetry.

All the Sciences are unhappy without the knowledge of what is good.

it, is that *Margites* had a great deal of Learning and Knowledge, and that this was an unhappy or unfortunate knowledge to him. If this knowledge was unfortunate to him he must needs have been a poor Man, if we will adhere to what has been said.

Alcib. So I think, *Socrates*, I should scarce yield to the most evident Truths, if I should not grant that.

Socrat. You have reason. But, *Alcibiades*, I entreat you, let us assure our selves of the Truth. You see how many Doubts and Uncertainties present themselves. You have your share of 'em, for you go sometimes to the right and sometimes to the left. That which seems true to you this Minute you receive as such; and the very next Moment 'tis quite another thing in your Opinion. Let us endeavour to know where to fix. And as I have already said, if the God to whom you are going to pray, should suddenly appear to you, and should ask you before you have begun your Prayers, if you would be satisfied that he should grant you some one of those things we first spoke of; or rather supposing he should permit you to make your request; which would you think most safe and most advantageous to you, whether to receive what he should give you, or to obtain what you should ask of him?

Alcib. I solemnly protest, *Socrates*, I know not how to answer you: For nothing seems to me to be more foolish, and more to be avoided with the greatest Care, than to run the risque of asking real Evils of God, while one thinks one is asking true Goods of him, and thereby to expose one's self, as you have very well said, to retract the next moment, and make new Requests quite contrary to the former.

Socrat. Is it not for this Reason that that Ancient Poet I was speaking of in the beginning of our Discourse; and who understood these things better than we, would have us end our Prayers with these Words,
 ✕ *And keep evil things from us, even when we ask 'em of thee?*

Alcib. So I suppose.

Socrat.

Socrat. In like manner the Lacedemonians, whether they imitate this Poet, or have of themselves found out this Truth, make both in publick and private a Prayer much like it. For they desire the Gods to give 'em that which is Comely with that which is Good. They were never heard to make any other Prayer; and yet they are as happy as any People in the World; and if they have sometimes seen an Interruption in the Course of their Successes; however none can justly blame their Prayer. For the Gods are free, and it depends on their Will, whether they will grant what is desir'd of 'em, or give what is contrary to it. And on this occasion I'll tell you another Story, which I have often heard related by some antient People. The Athenians being engag'd formerly in a War with the Lacedemonians, it happen'd that they were always beat in every Battle that was fought: Being deeply concern'd at this Misfortune, and seeking Means to divert these Miseries that impended, at last after divers Consultations they thought it the best Expedient to send to the Oracle of *Ammon*, to enquire of him the Reason of their Misfortunes, and to pray him to tell 'em why the Gods granted Victory rather to the Lacedemonians, than to the Athenians, who every day offer'd 'em a great Number of choicer Sacrifices, who enriched their Temples with nobler Offerings, who annually made more magnificent, and more devout Processions in their Honour, and in a word who themselves alone were at greater Expence in their Worship than all the rest of the Greeks together. Whereas (said they) the Lacedemonians have no regard to these Ceremonies, they are so covetous in reference to the Gods, that they offer them mutilated Victims, and are at much less charge in every thing that concerns Religion than the Athenians, tho they infinitely exceed 'em in Riches. After they had thus presented their Reasons, they ask'd how those Miseries that press'd their City might be diverted. The Prophet gave 'em no immediate an-

The Prayer of the Lacedemonians.

God is free and can either hear or reject our prayers without being unjust.

Prayers,
called Be-
nedictions.

God is not
to be cor-
rupted by
Bribes.

swer, for doubtless the God would not permit him to give any. But after some time, recalling the Ambassador, he told him. *This is the Answer Ammon gives the Athenians; he loves the Benedictions of the Lacedemonians much more than all the Sacrifices of the Greeks.* This was all he said. By the *Benedictions* of the Lacedemonians, I suppose, he only meant their Prayers, which indeed are more perfect than those of any other People. For as for the rest of the Greeks, some of 'em indeed offer'd Bulls with gilded Horns, and others consecrated rich Oblations to the Gods; but at the same time requested in their Prayers whatever their Passions suggested, without informing themselves, whether what they ask'd was Good or Evil. But the Gods, who hear their Blasphemies, are not pleas'd with those magnificent Processions, nor do they accept their costly Sacrifices. Therefore nothing requires so much Precaution and Attention as Prayer; to know what we ought to say, and what not. You'll find many other things in *Homer*, which amount to the same thing with the Story I have been telling you. For he says, the *Trojans*, when they built a Fort, *offer'd whole Hecatombes to the Immortal Gods, that the Winds carried a pleasant Odour from Earth to Heaven, and yet that the Gods refus'd to accept all this, but rejected it, because they had an Aversion for the sacred City of Troy, for Priamus, and all his People.* So that it was to no purpose for 'em to offer Sacrifices, and make Presents to the Gods that hated 'em; for the Deity is not to be corrupted by Bribes, like a covetous Usurer. And we should be Fools, if we should pretend by this means to render our selves more agreeable to the Gods than the Lacedemonians. For it would be a very horrible and most unworthy thing for the Gods to have more regard to our Gifts and Sacrifices, than to our Souls, in distinguishing those that are truly holy and righteous. But they have regard only to our Souls, and not at all to our Processions, or Sacrifices, upon which the most profligate Per-

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Persons, and those Cities whose Sins both against God and Man, arise to the greatest height, commonly value themselves more than good Men. Nor do the Gods ever suffer themselves to be bias'd by Presents, but despise all those things as *the God himself*, and his Prophet have assur'd us.

God only regards the Souls of them that offer Sacrifices to him.

So that it seems plain that nothing is so precious as Wisdom and Justice both in the sight of Gods and Men. And none are truly just and truly wise but those who both in their Words and Actions know how to acquit themselves of their Duty both to the Gods and to Men. Therefore I would now willingly know what your Sentiments are about what I have been saying.

In what true Justice, and true Wisdom consist.

Alcib. For my part, *Socrates* I can't choose but conform my Sentiments in this matter to yours, and those of that God of whom we have been speaking. Would it be reasonable for me to go about to oppose my weak Understanding to that of a God, and to contradict his Oracles?

Socrat. Don't you remember you told me you were in great perplexity; for fear you should at unawares pray for Evil things while you design'd only to ask for Good?

Alcib. I remember it very well, *Socrates*.

Socrat. You see 'tis not at all safe for you to go and pray in the Temple, in the Condition you are in, lest the God hearing your Blasphemies should reject your Sacrifices, and to punish you, should give you what you would not have: I am therefore of the mind that 'tis much better for you to be silent, for I know you very well. Your Pride, for that's the softest Name I can give your Imprudence, your Pride I say, probably will not permit you to use the Prayer of the Lacedemonians. Therefore 'tis altogether necessary you should wait for some Person to teach you how you ought to behave your self both towards the Gods and Men.

Alcib. And when will that time come, *Socrates*? and who is he that will instruct me? with what pleasure should I look upon him!

Socrat.

That is God.

*'Tis God
alone can
dissipate the
Darkness of
the Mind.*

*God has a
singular
Love for
Min.*

*'Tis in Eu-
ripides his
Phoenici-
ans.*

Socrat. He will do it, who takes a true Care of you. But methinks, as we read in *Homer*, that *Minerva* dissipated the Mist that cover'd *Diomedes* his Eyes, and hinder'd him from distinguishing God from Man, so 'tis necessary he should in the first place scatter the Darkness that covers your Soul, and afterwards give you those remedies that are necessary to put you in a condition of discerning Good and Evil; for at present you know not how to make a difference between 'em.

Alcib. Let him scatter then, let him destroy this Darkness of mine, and whatever else he pleases; I abandon my self to his conduct; and am very ready to obey all his Commands, provided I may but be made better by 'em.

Socrat. Do not doubt of that. For this Governour I tell you of, has a Singular Affection for you.

Alcib. I think I must defer my Sacrifice to that time.

Socrat. You have reason, 'tis more safe so to do than to run so great a Risque.

Alcib. Well then I'll defer it, *Socrates*; and to express my Thankfulness for the good counsel you have given me, give me leave to place on your Head this Crown which I wear on mine. We'll present other Crowns to the Gods, and all the Service we owe 'em, when I see that happy Day; it will not be long before it come, if they please.

Socrat. I receive this Favour with very great pleasure; and shall always kindly accept whatever comes from you. And as *Creon* (in *Euripides*) seeing *Tiresias* approach him with a Crown of Gold, which was the first Fruits of the Spoils of the Enemy, and with which the Athenians had honour'd him for his Art, said, *I take this Crown which is the sign of Victory for a good Omen; for you see, we are also in a great storm of War*; so I must say I take the honour I receive at your hand for a happy presage; for I am in no less a Tempest than *Creon*, while I am endeavouring to gain the Victory over all your Lovers.

The

The ARGUMENT OF THE AGES.

THE Ancients cited this Dialogue under the Title of Wisdom, or that of Philosophy, as may be seen in Diogenes Laertius: But how old soever these Titles are, they were given by Philosophers that were unacquainted with the Design of Socrates, who here proposes only to treat of the Education of Children, which is the Basis and Foundation of Philosophy. As Plants do not thrive well, unless it be in Ground that is well prepar'd, and which has been variously manured, and also receives the benign Influences of the Heavens; so Vertues will not grow, unless in a Soul well cultivated, and under the Influences of the divine Favour: On this good Education, not only the Happiness of Families depends, but also that of Cities, Republicks, and all States; this is what Socrates endeavours to maintain in this Dialogue. The young People of the best Families of Athens, dazzled with the Glory of Cimon, Themistocles, and Pericles; and full of vain Ambition, thought of nothing but of adhering to the Sophists, who promised to make 'em very great Politicians, and to put 'em into a Capacity of governing the Athenians and their Allies. Their Parents were tinctur'd with the same Folly: The wisest of 'em were those that fear'd the Consequences of this Ambition, and only discover'd the Dangers to which their Children were expos'd by the Corruption of those that instructed Youth. Socrates here discourses with a Father and a Son of this Character. The Son aims only

to make himself a good Tyrant; and the Father does not blame this Ambition of his Son, provided he avoided the Corruption that reigned at that time. All the Business is to find a good Master. Socrates makes an admirable Improvement of this Disposition of theirs, to shew, that one Man can never teach another true Wisdom, which alone makes Men govern well; but that the special Favour of God is requisite to this purpose, without which all the Endeavours of Masters and Schollars too prove useless; and this he confirms by Examples. This is the true Subject of this Dialogue, in which we find divers surprizing Truths which shall be explain'd in their place. This Conversation pass'd that year, in which the Athenians were beat at Ephesus by Tisaphernus; which was the 4th year of the 92d Olympiade, 407 years before the birth of Christ. Plato being 20 years of Age, was then the Disciple of Socrates.

The Character of this Dialogue is the same with that of the two former.

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THE AGES,

OR

Of Wisdom.

Demodocus, Socrates, Theages.

Demod. **S***ocrates*, I have a great mind to discourse with you a little in private, if you are at leisure; and if you are not, I entreat you to take a little time for my Sake, unless your Business is very urgent.

Soc. I have always leisure, and more to serve you than any other Person; if you have a mind to discourse with me, I am ready for you.

Dem. Shall we retire into the Porch of the Temple of *Jupiter Elutherius*?

Soc. What you please.

Dem. * Let us go then, *Socrates*, Methinks Animals, and even Man himself are like Plants: For we who manure the Earth know by experience that 'tis easy to prepare all things necessary before we plant; but when that which we have planted is come up, the care and pains we must take about it is very great and troublesome. 'Tis the same with Men: And I judge of others by my self. There's my Son; ever since he has been born, his Education will not suffer me to rest one moment, but keeps me in continual fear. Without entering into any particular

We need the help of a God, who is a Saviour, when we take Advice about the Education of Youth.

* In the Original *Demodocus* speaks like a good honest Country Man, who is wholly taken up with Husbandry: But I don't think it necessary to make my Translation speak after that manner.

account

account of all the occasions of Fear I have concerning him, I'll tell you one which has but very lately appear'd; And that is an Ambition he has, which indeed is not dishonourable, but is a very nice and dangerous thing, and makes me afraid. He would fain fall upon the study of * Wisdom. Probably some of his Companions, and some young People of our Town who frequent *Athens*, give him an account of some Discourses they have heard, which have disturb'd his Brain. For he's so full of Emulation that he continually torments me with importunate Intreaties, that I would give a piece of Money to some Sophist to accomplish him. 'Tis not the Charge that I fear; but I see this Passion of his will expose him to great danger. Hitherto I have restrained him by amusing him with good Words; but now that I suppose I can be Master of him no longer; I think the best course I can take is to consent to let him take his own course, for fear the Conversation he may have in secret and without my knowledge should corrupt him. Therefore I am now come to *Athens* to put him under the Tuition of some Sophist; and 'tis very happy that I have met you; for you are the Person whom above all others I should wish to consult upon this Affair. If therefore you have any Advice to give me; I earnestly intreat it of you; and you are too just to refuse me.

Advice is sacred, and consequently ought not to be lightly given: but wellthought on.

Nothing is more divine than what belongs to the Education of Children.

Soc. But have you not often heard, *Demodocus*, that Advice is a Sacred Thing: and if it is Sacred in all other occasions of Life, 'tis much more so in this; for of all things, on which a Man can ask advice, there is nothing more Divine than that which respects the Education of Children. First then, let You and I agree, what it is precisely that you desire, and about what we are to consult, lest I understand one thing and you another (as it may often happen); and so at the end of our Discourse we both appear

* Wisdom is a Word that signifies divers things, as Knowledge, Skill, Vertue. *Plato* uses it for that Science which teaches how to govern States.

ridicu-

ridiculous to our selves for having talk'd so long without understanding one another.

Dem. You say right, *Socrates*.

Soc. I say right, ay certainly ——— And yet I don't say so right as I thought, but retract in part ; for it comes into my Mind, that this young Man may have a desire very different from that which we think he has ; which would render us still more ridiculous for consulting about quite another thing than the Object of his Wishes. 'Tis best therefore to begin with him, and ask him what it is that he desires.

Dem. Yes, certainly, that's the best way.

Soc. But, I pray, what is this fine young Man's Name ?

Dem. His Name is *Theages*.

Soc. * What an excellent, and sacred Name have you given him ! Well, then *Theages*, you desire to become wise, and you urge your Father to find you a Man, whose Conversation may furnish you with that Wisdom, with which you are so much in Love ?

Theag. Yes.

Soc. Who are those Persons you call wise, are they such as are skillful in what they have learn'd, or the ignorant ?

The. Such as are skillful.

Soc. What ! has not your Father caus'd you to be instructed in every thing, that the Children of our best Citizens learn, as to read, to play on Musical Instruments, to wrestle, and to perform all other Exercises ?

The. Yes, my Father has caus'd me to be taught all this.

Soc. Well then ! and do you think there is any other Science, in which your Father is oblig'd to cause you to be instructed ?

The. Yes without doubt.

* The Athenians were very careful to give fine Sacred Names to their Children : But all Names are false, when they don't describe the Character of those to whom they are given.

Soc.

Soc. What Science is that? Tell me, that I may render you some Service in the Matter.

The. My Father very well knows it; for I have very often told him of it; but he is pleas'd to speak after such a manner to you, as if he did not know what I desir'd. There's no day passes, but he disputes with me, and still refuses to commit me to the Care of some skillful Man.

Soc. But all that you have hitherto said to him, has pass'd only between you two. Now therefore take me for an Arbitrator; and before me declare what Science it is you have a mind to attain. For if you were willing to learn that Science which teaches how to steer Ships, and I should ask you, *Theages*, what Science is it in which you complain your Father is not willing to have you instructed? Would you not immediately answer me, that 'tis the Science of Pilots?

The. Yes doubtless.

Soc. And if you were willing to learn the Art which teaches how to drive Chariots, would you not in like manner tell me, 'tis that of Charioteers?

The. I should tell you the very same thing.

Soc. Has that of which you are so desirous a Name, or has it none?

The. I believe it has a Name.

Soc. Do you know it then without knowing the Name of it?

The. I know it, and I know the Name of it too.

Soc. Tell me what it is then.

The. What other Name can it have than that of Science?

Soc. But is not the Art of Charioteers also a Science; what do you think 'tis a piece of Ignorance?

The. No certainly.

Soc. Then 'tis a Science; what is the use of it? Does it not teach us to guide the Horses that are fasten'd to a Chariot?

The. Most certainly.

Soc. And is not the Art of Pilots also a Science?

The. So I think.

This Name is too general, and does not sufficiently explain the thing enquir'd after, as Socrates is going to shew.

Soc. Is it not that which teaches us how to guide ships?

The. The very same.

Soc. Well what is that which you have a mind to learn, and what does that teach us to govern?

The. I think it teaches us to govern Men.

Soc. What, sick Men?

The. No.

Soc. For that belongs to the Medicinal-Art, does it not?

The. Who doubts it?

Soc. Well then does it teach us to regulate the Choir of Musicians?

The. Not at all.

Soc. For that properly appertains to Musick.

The. True.

Soc. But does it teach us to govern those who perform the Exercises?

The. No more than the others.

Soc. For that belongs to the Gymnastick Art. What sort of Men then does it teach us to govern? Explain your self clearly as I have done on the other Sciences.

The. It teaches us to govern those who are in the City.

Soc. But are there not Sick Men too in the City?

The. Without doubt there are, but I don't mean them, I speak of the other Citizens.

Soc. Let's see, if I understand well of what Art you speak, I think you don't speak of that which teaches us to govern Mowers, Vine-dressers, Plow-Men, Sowers, and Threshers; for that belongs to Husbandry. Nor do you speak of that which teaches to govern those that handle the Saw, the Plane, and the Lathe: for that belongs to the Joyner's Art. But you speak of the Art that teaches to govern not only these but all other Artificers, and all private Persons both Men and Women: Perhaps this is the Science you mean.

The. 'Tis the very same, I had no design to speak of any other.

Soc. But, I pray, answer me, did *Ægisthus* who kill'd *Agamemnon* at *Argos*, govern those sorts of People, Artificers and private Persons, both Men and Women; or others?

The. He govern'd only such as these; are there any other to be govern'd?

Soc. Did not *Peleus* the Son of *Eacus* likewise govern these at *Phthia*? And did not *Periander* the Son of *Cypselus* rule 'em at *Corinth*? Did not *Archelaus* the Son of *Perdiccas*, who some few years since ascended the Throne of *Macedonia*, also command these sorts of People? And did not * *Hippias* the Son of *Pisistratus*, who govern'd in this City, rule our Citizens in like manner?

It was 5 or 6 years before.

He was kill'd at the end of this very Year.

The. Who doubts it?

Soc. Tell me, what do you call † *Bacis*, the Sybille and our *Amphilytus*; when you would denote their profession.

The. What should we call 'em but Deviners?

Soc. Very well. Answer me after the same manner about these: What do you call *Hippias*, and *Periander*, when you would denote their profession by the Dominion they Exercise?

The. Tyrants, I think; what other Name can we give 'em?

Soc. Then every one who desires to command all the People in this City, desires to acquire a Dominion like theirs, a Tyrannical Dominion, and to become a Tyrant.

The. I think so.

* *Hippias*, the Son of *Pisistratus* was Tyrant of *Athens* four years; according to *Thucydides* he succeeded his Father, and not *Hipparchus*. After he had reigned 4 years he was banished; and 20 years after his Exile was kill'd at the Battle of *Marathon*, where he bore Arms for the Persians.

† *Bacis* was a Prophet who long before *Xerxes* made a Descent into *Greece*, predicted to the People all that should befall 'em. *Herodotus* relates some of his Prophecies in his VIII Book; and looks upon 'em to be so formal and plain, since their Accomplishment, that he says, he neither dares accuse these Oracles of Falshood himself, nor suffer others so to do, or to refuse to give Credit to 'em. *Aristophanes* speaks of this Deviner in his Comedy of *Peace*. As for *Amphilytus*, I know nothing of him.

Soc.

Soc. This then is the Science with which you are so much in Love.

The. That is a natural Consequence of what I have said.

Soc. You are a Villain ! Do you desire to become our Tyrant ; and have the boldness to complain that your Father does not put you under the Conduct of some Person that may qualifie you for Tyranny ? ‡ And you, *Demodocus* ; who know your Son's Ambition, and have wherewith to send him to be accomplish'd in this fine Science which he desires, are not you ashamed to envy him this Happiness ; and not to provide him some great Master ? But since he now complains of you, as you see, in my Presence ; let us consider whither to send him, and if we know any one whose Conversation may make him an accomplish'd Tyrant.

Dem. Socrates, I beg of you for God's sake let us consider it together. For on such an occasion as this we have need of good Advice.

Soc. Hold a little, let us first know of him what he thinks of the Matter.

Dem. You may ask him what you please.

Soc. Theages, if we had to do with *Euripides*, who somewhere says,

Wise are the Tyrants, who with th' wise Converse.
and should ask him, *Euripides*, in what do you say Tyrants become wise by the Conversation of wise Men ? If instead of that he should tell us,
Wise are the Plow-men, who with th' wise Converse,
we should not fail to ask him, in what are the Plow-men render'd wise ? Do you think he would give us any other answer than that they are render'd wise in that which belongs to Husbandry ?

The. No: He would give no other Answer.

‡ This is an Ironie of *Socrates* founded on what *Demodocus* said at the beginning of this Discourse, viz. that his Son had an Ambition that was not dishonourable. *Marsilius Ficinus* and *De Serres* were equally mistaken here ; and not perceiving the Ironie corrupted this Passage by their Translation.

Demodocus takes this in earnest. which Socrates spoke ironically.

Soc. And if he should tell us,
Wife are the Cooks, who with the wife Converse,
 and we should ask him wherein they are made wife ?
 What do you think he would answer ? Would he
 not say they are made wife in the Art of Cookery ?

The. Without doubt.

Soc. And if he should say,
Wife are the Wrestlers, who with th' wife Con-
verse :

Would he not upon the Repetition of the same
 Question give us the same Reply, that they are made
 expert in the Art of Wrestling ? *The.* Yes certainly.

Soc. This being so, since he tells us,
Wife are the Tyrants, who with th' wife Con-
verse :

If we should ask him, *Euripides*, in what are
 those Tyrants render'd wife ? What answer do you
 think he would make us ? in what would he make
 this Wisdom consist ? *The.* I protest I can't tell.

Soc. Shall I tell you then ?

The. With all my heart, if you please.

Soc. He would say they were made wife in that
 Art which *Anacreon* tells us, * the wife *Callicrete*
 know perfectly well. Don't you remember his Songs ?

The. I do remember it.

Soc. Well then don't you desire to be committed to
 the Care of some Man, who is of the same Professi-
 on with this Virgin of *Cyane*, and knows like her
 the Art of forming Tyrants, that you may become
 our Tyrant, and that of the whole City ?

The. *Socrates*, you have play'd and jested on me
 a great while.

Soc. How ! Don't you say you desire to acquire
 that Science which will teach you to govern all the
 Citizens ? Can you govern them without becoming
 their Tyrant ?

The. I could heartily wish to become the Tyrant

* This was a Virgin who employ'd her self in teaching Politicks,
 as *Aspasia*, *Diottima*, and some others did after her. The Verses
 which *Anacreon* made on her are lost.

of all Mankind, and if that be too much, at least of the grearest part of 'em; and I believe, *Socrates*, you would have the same Ambition as well as all other Men: Nay perhaps it would so little content you to be a Tyrant, that you would be a God; but I did not tell you that that was the thing I desir'd.

This is founded on what Socrates was wont to say that Men should labour to make themselves like God.

Soc. What is it you desire? Don't you say you desire to govern Citizens?

The. Not to govern them by force as Tyrants do; but by their own Consent, as those great Men have done which we have had in this City.

Soc. What! as *Themistocles*, *Pericles*, *Cimon*, and other great Politicians have done?

The. Yes.

Soc. Well then, if you had a mind to become very expert in the Art of Horseman-ship, to what Men do you think you ought to apply your self to become a good Horse-man? Would you go to any other than Querries?

The. No cerrainly.

Soc. Would you not make choice of the best Querries; those that have the greatest Number of Horses; and such as ride not only their own Horses, but those of other Men?

The. Without doubt I should choose such.

Soc. And if you would become very expert at shooting, would you not address your self to the best Archers; and to such as best know how to use all sorts of Bows and Arrows?

The. Yes, certainly.

Soc. Tell me then, since you have a mind to become expert in Politicks, do you think you can acquire this Skill in addressing your self to any beside great Politicians, who have a depth of Judgment in this Science, and know how to conduct, not only their own City, but many others as well of the Greeks as the Barbarians? Or do you think by conversing with any other sort of Persons, to become as expert as these great Men?

The. Socrates. I have heard talk of some Discourses

courses of yours; which you made (as 'tis said) to shew, that * the Sons of these great Politicians were no better than the Sons of Coblers; and as far as I can judg, 'tis an undeniable Truth. I should therefore be a great Fool to believe that any one of 'em, could give me his Wisdom, which he did not communicate to his own Son, and which he ought to have bestow'd on him much rather, if he were capable of doing it, than on a Stranger.

Soc. What would you do then, *Theages*, if you had a Son that follow'd you so closely every day, telling you he had a mind to be a great Painter? and complained continually that you who were his Father, would not be at the least expence to satisfy his desire; while on the other side he despis'd the most excellent Masters, and refus'd to go to School to 'em to learn their Art? I say the same if he had a mind to play well on the Flute, or to be an excellent Harper; should you know any other way to gratify him, or any other People to send him to; when he should refuse such Masters?

The. For my part I know not what could be done.

Soc. This is exactly the same course that you take with your Father: How then can you be surpriz'd and complain, that he knows not what to do with you, nor where to send you to make you an Accomplish'd Man? *For it lies wholly at your own Door.* If you will, he will immediately put you under the Conduct of our best Masters; and such as are most expert in Politicks; You have nothing to do but to choose your Teacher; They'll ask nothing of you. So that you may save your Money, and acquire with them more Reputation among the People, † than you can obtain in the Conversation of any other.

* All those great Politicians could not teach their Children to be wise; a sure sign that Wisdom can't be taught; there is nothing of it in Man, but what God puts into him, as *Socrates* proves more at large in his *Menon*.

† For the common People are very ill Judges, and may be easily deceiv'd, they constantly take those Men for the most wise and skillful, who are most bold and insolent.

The.

The. Well then, *Socrates*, are not you likewise one of those Great Men? if you'll suffer me to attend you 'tis enough, I'll seek for no other Master.

Soc. What is that you say *Theages*?

Dem. Ah *Socrates*, My Son has said very well, and you would do me a great Kindness! No, I have no greater Happiness than to see my Son pleas'd with your Company; and that you are so good as to permit him to take this Liberty. I am asham'd to say how much I desire it; but I entreat you both for God's sake, you, *Socrates*, to receive my Son; and you, Son, never to seek any other Master than *Socrates*. By this means you'll both deliver me from my greatest Trouble and Fears. For I am continually ready to die with Fear lest my Son should fall into the Hands of some Person that will corrupt him.

Socrates
was then
perhaps the
only Person
at Athens,
with whom
a Man
might trust
his Children
without
danger.

The. Well, Sir, you may lay aside your Fears on my account, if you are but happy enough to persuade *Socrates*, and engage him to be troubled with me.

Dem. Son, you have Reason. I'll now apply my self to none but you, *Socrates*; and not to amuse you with superfluous Discourse; I am ready to give my self up to you, and all that I have in the World: You may entirely dispose of me, if you will love my *Theages*, and procure him all that good, you are capable of doing him.

Soc. I don't wonder, *Demodocus*, that you are so very importunate, if you believe your Son may receive Advantage from me; for I know nothing about which a wise Father ought to be more earnest and careful than about what concerns his Son; and what may make him a good Man. But that which surprizes me, and which I can't comprehend, is, how you came to think me capable of rendring you this great peice of Service, and of forming him into a good Citizen: And how came he to imagine me to be in a better Condition of assisting him than his Father? For in the first place you have liv'd longer in the World than I; you have exercised the Principal Offices, and are the most considerable Person in your

What ought
to be the
greatest
care of a
wise Fa-
ther.

For the Ci-
ty was com-
pos'd of di-
vers Towns
or Bur-
roughs.

Town ; and none is more honour'd or esteem'd than you, in all the rest of the City. Neither you nor your Son see any of these Advantages in me. But if *Theages* despises the Conversation of our Politicians ; and is looking after those Persons who promise to educate Youth well, we have here *Prodicus* of *Ceos*, *Gorgias* the *Leontine*, *Polus* of *Agrigentum*, and divers others, who are of so great Ability, that as they go their Rounds from City to City, they make a shift to persuade the young People of all the noblest and richest Families, who might be instructed *Gratis* by one of their own Citizens whom they would please to choose ; they make a shift I say, to persuade 'em to renounce those of their own City ; and to adhere to them, tho' they must pay 'em great Summs, and after all think themselves under great Obligations to 'em. * These are the Men that you, and your Son should choose, instead of thinking of me ; for I know none of those polite and happy Sciences : I would indeed understand 'em with all my heart, but I have always profess'd to acknowledge that I know nothing (as I may say) unless it be one little Science † which only respects Love. And I for my part, dare boast of being more profound in this Science, such as it is, than any of my Predecessors, or those of the present Age.

The. Sir, you see very well, *Socrates* will not trouble himself with me ; if he would, I should very readily put my self under his Conduct ; but he jests when he thus speaks of himself ; for I know divers of my Equals, and others of a more advanc'd Age than mine ; who before they attended to him had no great matter of merit ; but since they have enjoy'd

* This is an Ironie which *Socrates* uses to ridicule that excessive eagerness, with which the Athenians ran to these Sophists, who were good for nothing but to corrupt their Minds.

† *Socrates* means, that he was only fit to inspire Men with the Love of Wisdom. Without this Love all is dead. This is a Principle of Life, and, as he elsewhere says, the most speedy, most certain and most efficacious help which God has given Men to bring 'em to supreme Happiness.

his

his Conversation are in a little time become the finest Men in the World ; and far surpass those to whom they were much inferior before.

Soc. Theages, Do you know how this comes to pass?

The. Yes truly I know it very well, and if you were will willing ; I should soon be like those young Men, and should have no occasion to envy 'em.

Soc. You are mistaken, my dear *Theages*, and are very far from the truth ; which I am now going to inform you * I have had by the Favour of God, ever since I was born, a Genius that always accompanies, and governs me. This Genius is a Voice which whenever it speaks to me always diverts me from what I have a mind to do, and never prompts me to it. When any one of my Friends communicates any design to me, if I hear this Voice, 'tis a certain sign that God does not approve of this design, but would divert him from it. I'll name several Persons to you, who are Witnesses of what I say. You know the Gallant *Charmides*, *Glaucon's* Son: He came to me one day to acquaint me with a design he had to go and contend at the † *Nemean* Games. He had no sooner begun to communicate this Matter to me, but I heard the Voice ; Therefore I endeavour'd to dissuade him from it, and said thus to him ; as soon as you began to open your Mouth I heard the Voice of the Genius that guides me, therefore I entreat you not to go. He replied, perhaps this Voice advertises you that I shall not be Crown'd : but if I don't obtain the Victory, I shall however exercise my self ; I shall engage with the rest, and that is enough. With these words he left me, and went to the abovesaid Exercises. You may know

* I have had by the Favour of God, the Greek says *Θεία μοῖρα*, by a Divine Lot, that is to speak properly by Predestination ; and consequently by the favour of God. *μοῖρα* is here the same thing as *κλήρο* in the Writings of St. Paul, as that Learned and Pious Person who has lately made a small extract of *Plato* has observ'd before me.

† One of the four famous Games of Greece, which were celebrated once in three Years near the City of *Nemea* in *Peloponnesus* in honour of *Archemorus*.

from his own Mouth what befel him, and it well deserves your Notice. And if you would ask *Clitomachus*, the Brother of * *Timarchus*, what this latter told him when he was going to dye for having despis'd the Admonition of my good Genius; and again what was said to him by *Evathlus* who was so famous for running Races, and who entertained *Timarchus* when he fled, he would tell you that *Timarchus* said to him in exprefs Terms —

The. What did he say to him, *Socrates*?

Soc. I am going to die because I would not believe *Socrates*. And if you are curious to know the Story, I'll tell it you. When *Timarchus* rose from Table with *Philemon* the Son of *Philemonides*, to go and kill *Nicias* the Son of *Heroscander*, for none but they two were in the Conspiracy, as he rose up he said to me, *What do you say to me, Socrates?* you have nothing to do but to stay all here and drink together; I am obliged to be gone, but will return in a moment if I can. Upon this I heard the Voice, and immediately calling him back said to him; I beg you would not go out, my good Genius has given his wanted Signal. Upon which he stayed: But some time after rises up again, and says: *Socrates I am going.* The Voice was repeated, and I stop'd him again. In fine because he would escape me he rose up the third time without saying any thing to me; and taking his Opportunity when my Thoughts were otherwise employ'd, he slip'd out, and did that which brought him to his End; This was the reason he told his Brother he was going to die because he would not believe me. You may also learn from many of our Citizens what I told 'em about the Expedition of *Sicily*, and the Shocks that our Army would receive there. But not to mention things that are past, of which you may be easily inform'd by those that know 'em perfectly well; You may now

Under the
Government
of Alcibia-
des and
Nicias.

* I suppose this is *Timarchus* of *Chironia* who desir'd to be interr'd near one of *Socrates* his Sons who died a little before. I could never find any footstep of this History elsewhere.

make

make tryal of this Signal which my good *Genius* commonly gives me, that you may see whether he speaks true. For when the brave *Sannion* went for the Army I heard this Voice; and he is now going with * *Thrasyllus* against *Ephesus*, and the other Cities of *Ionian*; I am persuaded he'll dye there, or some Misfortune will befall him; and † I very much fear that Enterprize will not succeed. I have told you all this to make you comprehend, that even for those who are willing to adhere to me, all depends on this good *Genius* that governs me. || For those whom he opposes can never derive any advantage from me: I can't so much as have any Conversation with 'em. There are many whom he does not hinder me from seeing; and yet these make no greater proficiency than the former; but those, whose Conversation with me is approv'd and favour'd by this good *Genius* are such as you told me of just now; who in a very little time make a very great progress; in some this Progress is stable and permanent, and takes deep Root; and in others 'tis but for a time: That is while they are with me they advance after a surprizing manner; but they no sooner leave me but they return to their former Condition; and don't at all differ from the Generality of Men. This is what happen'd to *Aristides*, the Son of *Lyfimachus*,

* *Thrasyllus* was chosen General with *Thrasylbulus* the 4th year of the 92 Olympiade.

† Indeed the Athenians were beaten and repuls'd at *Ephesus*. *Xenoph. Book I.* Therefore *Plutarch* says in the Life of *Alcibiades* that *Thrasyllus* his Army was terribly gall'd under the Walls of *Ephesus*: and that in memory of this Defeat the *Ephesians* erected a Trophy of Brass to the shame of the *Athenians*.

|| A remarkable Passage. Here are four States of Men. Some are rejected of God for their Wickedness, which can't be hid from him, others are tolerated for a time; God gives 'em time to see, and learn, but they are not attentive, and 'tis only their own fault, that they make no progress. Others are approv'd, but these last succeed very differently: In some the good Seed falling into good Ground takes deep root, and in others it flourishes but for a time; as the Gospel says of those who receive the Word in stony Places or among Thorns. This is the Truth *Socrates* designs to teach in this Place.

and

and Grandson to *Aristides*, while he was with me he made a very strange Progress in a very short time but being oblig'd to go in some Expedition, he embark'd : At his return he found that * *Thucydides* the Son of *Melesias*, and Grandson of *Thucydides* had been willing to be acquainted with me; but it happen'd the day before, I know not how, that he fell out with me for some Words we had in disputing. Now *Aristides* coming to see me, after the first Complements; *Socrates*, says he, *I am just now told that Thucydides is angry with you, and acts with a great deal of Haughtiness as if he were somewhat more than ordinary* 'Tis true, said I. † *Ha*, Replied he, *what does he no longer remember what a Slave he was before he saw you?* 'Tis very likely he has forgotten it, said I. Truly *Socrates*, added he, *A very ridiculous thing has happen'd to me. I presently ask'd him what it was.* 'Tis this, said he. *Before I went for the Army, I was capable of discoursing with Men of the greatest sense; and was not inferior to any of 'em in Conversation. I made as handsome a figure as another; and always kept company with the best and most polite Men I could find. Whereas now 'tis quite contrary, I carefully avoid 'em, I am so much ashamed of my Ignorance. I ask'd him if this Faculty had left him suddenly or gradually. He answer'd me, that it left him gradually. Well how did you come by it,* said I, *was it while you were Learning something of me, or some other way?* I'll tell you *Socrates*, reply'd he, *'Tis a thing that will seem incredible, but yet 'tis very true: ‡ I could never learn any thing of you, as you know very well.*

* The Grand-Son of *Thucydides* who rivall'd *Pericles* in the Government.

† Men are no better than vile Slaves before they have attended to Philosophical Discourses.

‡ *Socrates* calls those good and polite, who spent their time in discoursing on solid and agreeable Subjects.

§ He means he learn'd nothing that had made a deep and lasting Impression on his Mind, he had Opinions only, and not Science since he had been by himself, but was more knowing when he was with *Socrates*.

How

However I made some proficiency, if I was but in the same House * where you were, tho' not in the same Room ; when I could be in the same Room I advanc'd still more ; and whenever you spoke, I sensibly found my self improve yet more when I had my Eyes upon you, than when I look'd another way : But this Progress was incomparably greater, when I sat near you and touch'd you, whereas now all this Habit is utterly vanish'd. Thus you see, *Theages*, what sort of Conversation is to be had with me. † If it please God, you'll advance considerably, and in a very little time ; otherwise your Endeavours will be fruitless. Judge then if it be not more advantageous, and safe for you to apply your self to one of those Masters who are constantly succesful with all their Scholars, than to follow me, with all the hazards you must run.

*A handsom
Banter on
the Sophists.*

The. I'll tell you, *Socrates*, what we ought to do in my Opinion. When we begin to live together, let us try this God that conducts us : If he approves our Conversation ; I am at the top of my Wishes : if he disapproves it ; let us immediately consider what Course to take, and whether I ought to seek another Master, or should endeavour to appease this God * by Prayers, by Sacrifices, or any other Expiations, which our Deviners teach.

Dem. Don't oppose the young Man's Desires any longer. *Theages* speaks very well.

Soc. If you think 'tis best to do so ; with all my heart. I agree with you.

* There are four Degrees of Light, according as you more or less approach wise Men. 'Tis something to lodg in the same House, 'tis a little more to be in the same Room ; 'tis a yet greater advantage to have one's Eyes always upon 'em ; that so one may loose none of their Words, but the greatest benefit of all, is to be near 'em, and if I may so speak, to be always glew'd to 'em. Few Persons are so confirm'd in Wisdom, that they can lose sight of 'em with Impunity, and without great damage. These different Degrees are still more remarkable in proportion to the Approach we make to the divine Wisdom. I believe this is all the Mystery *Socrates* designs to teach here. We see admirable Proofs of this Truth in the Writings of the Saints.

† For all the Good we either do, or receive, comes from God.

* There are but three ways Men can use to appease the Anger of God, Prayers, Sacrifices, and Purifications.

The

The ARGUMENT
OF
EUTYPHRON.

IN all times, and in all Religions there have been superstitious Persons and Hipocrites. Both these have offer'd almost the same Injury to God, and equally hurt Religion. Plato introduces one of these Characters in this Dialogue; for 'tis not easy to determine whether Eutyphron acts superstitiously or hypocritically; the former is most probable, Eutyphron goes about to accuse his own Father of Murder; This is a very unnatural step: But on the other hand 'tis the step of a Man who consults not Flesh and Blood; when the Question is about doing an Action so agreeable to God as that of bringing a Criminal to Punishment. The Business in hand therefore here is to examine this Action to know if it be just. And Plato renews this Discourse to ridicule the false Religions of the Pagans, and the Plurality of Gods, together with the rest of their Fables: And to shew, that they who then pass for the most intelligent Persons in Matters of Religion, had indeed no knowledg of it, and render'd God only false Worship, which dishonour'd him. This is as great a Design as he could have; and he executes it with marvellous Address, to which purpose the Person against whom Socrates had disputed serves extremely well. For Eutyphron was no ordinary Man; he was a Deviner; and consequently cloth'd with the Character, and entrusted with the Office of instructing others in Religion. Nothing can be more ingenious, and natural than the beginning of this Dialogue, where Plato

with

with great Simplicity and Modesty, and without the least appearance of Affectation, discovers at first view, not only the Character of Eutyphron, and that of all superstitious Persons, who by their Religious Mistakes are commonly carried to the Commission of all sorts of Injuries and Crimes; but also that of Socrates, that of his Persecutors, and in general, that of the Athenians. This Dialogue is full of excellent Precepts of Morality and Religion. There's a great deal of Ingenuity and Subtily in it: The lively Descriptions, the frequent Ironies, and satyrical Strokes admirably diversify it. Was there ever seen a more subtle piece of Satyr than that which Plato makes against Melitus? He is not content to mention his Name, and in what part of the City he was born; but likewise draws his Picture; and yet all these Indications can't make him known to Eutyphron. He that accuses Socrates, and thinks himself capable of reforming the Commonwealth, by shewing what it is that corrupts Youth, and overthrows Religion, is neither known to him whom he accuses, nor to the Ministers of that Religion of which he pretends to be the great Support. All the other like Strokes will be easily observ'd in Reading, and the Beauty of the Character of the superstitious Man, who believes a thing only because he believes it, and who is always near the Truth without ever attaining it, will be plainly discern'd. The Reader will see with Pleasure, that Eutyphron is a good honest Man, who has upright Intentions, but is so full of respect for the Fables that have been taught him, that he receives 'em all as sacred without ever entertaining the least suspicion concerning 'em; he is so swell'd with Pride, and full of that precipitant Confidence, which Superstition commonly inspires, that he publishes his Visions as certain Truths, not to be contradicted by any Man. And Socrates, who makes, as if he were willing to be instructed, receives his Doctrine with refin'd Ironies, and ambiguous Railleries; and at length confutes it with abundance of Strength and Solidity.

E U.

EUTYPHRON,

OR

Of Holiness.

Eutyphron, Socrates.

This King's Porch was a place on the right side of the Ceramique, where one of the nine Archons, who was called the King, presided for the space of a Year, and took Cognisance of the Affairs of Orphans, and of Outrages that were committed against Religion.

Eut. **W**HAT News *Socrates*? What have you left the Company of *Lyceus* to come hither into the King's Porch? you have no business to bring you hither, as I have.

Soc. 'Tis somewhat worse than business, *Eutyphron*, the *Athenians* call it an Accusation.

Eut. How do you say? then 'tis likely some body accuses you, * for I can never believe you would accuse any one.

Soc. You are in the right.

Eut. Well who is your Accuser?

Soc. I don't know very well my self, I take him to be a Young Man who is not yet known, I think his Name is *Melitus*, he is of the Town of *Pitheus*; If you remember any one of that Quarter of the City who bears that Name, who has Lank Hair, a Thin Beard and a Crooked Nose, that is the Man.

Eut. I don't remember any such Person, *Socrates*, but I pray, what is the Charge he brings against you?

Soc. What is the Charge? Why 'tis such a one as shews him to be no Ordinary Man. For 'tis no

* This is very remarkable. *Eutyphron* who is going to accuse his own Father can't believe that *Socrates* is capable of accusing any Man. *Plato* makes use either of the precipitancy of this Superstitious Man, or of the good opinion he has of himself, to insinuate that at *Athens* honest Men never drove the Trade of Accusers.

little

little thing to be so knowing in such Important and Sublime matters at an Age so little advanc'd as his. He says he knows how our Youth are corrupted, and who they are that corrupt 'em. He seems to be some able Man who has taken notice of my Ignorance, and is come to accuse me for having corrupted his Companions; and to bring me before the City as our Common Mother. And it must be confess'd, he seems the only Person that knows how to lay the foundations of good Policy. For 'tis reasonable that a States-Man should always begin with the Education of Young People, to render them as Vertuous as may be; as a Good Gardiner bestowes his first Labour and Care on the Young Plants, and then passes on to the others, *Melitus* doubtless takes the same Course; and begins by cutting us up who hinder the Young Plants from sprouting and improving. After this without doubt he'll extend his beneficent Labours to those Plants that are more advanc'd; and will by this means do the greatest kindness imaginable to the City. This is what may be expected from a Person that knows so well how to begin at the right end.

The Education of Youth is the Foundation of good Policy.

Ent. I should be glad to see it, *Socrates*, but I tremble for fear of the Contrary, * for in attacking you he seems to me to attack the City in the most sacred part of it: But I pray tell me what he says you do thus to corrupt Young People.

Soc. He says I do such things as at first hearing must needs seem absurd and impossible, for he says I am Forger of Gods, that I introduce New Gods, and do not believe the Old ones. This is the Charge he has against me.

Ent. I understand you; 'tis because you say you have a Genius that dayly guides you. Upon this he accuses you of introducing new Opinions in Re-

* The Greek says, *in injuring you he labours to ruine the City, and begins by the Fire-side.* It was a Proverb in Greece. to begin by the Fire-side. when they spoke of beginning with what was most excellent and sacred; for the Fire side contain'd the Domestick Gods. So that this was a great Encomium of *Socrates*. Wise Men are to Cities what Domestick Gods are to Families.

ligion, and comes to defame you in this Court, well knowing that the Mob is always ready to receive this sort of Calumnies. What do not I my self meet with, when in publick Assemblies I speak of Divine things, and predict what shall come to pass? They all laugh at me as a Fool; not that any one of the things I have foretold has fail'd of its Accomplishment; but the Business is this, they envy all such as we are. And what remains for us to do? The best way is never to trouble our Heads about it; but to go on still in our own way.

The Character of the Athenians which agrees well with the Account St. Luke gives us of 'em in the Acts of the Apostles.

Soc. My dear *Eutyphron*, is it so great an Unhappiness to be laugh'd at? For at bottom I believe the Athenians don't much trouble their Heads to examine whether a Man has a great Capacity or not; provided he does not go about to teach others what he knows. But I believe if a Man should make it his business to teach, they would be down-right Angry, either out of Envy as you intimate, or for some other Reason that we know not.

Eut. I have no mind to try to my Cost, as you do, what Sentiments they have of me.

Soc. That's another Matter; * It may be you are very reserv'd, and do not willingly communicate your Wisdom to others, whereas I am affraid they think the ove I bear to all Mankind engages me too freely to teach 'em all I know, not only without asking a Reward, but even by preventing them, and pressing 'em to hear me. But if they would content themselves with laughing at me, as you say they do at you, it would be no unpleasant thing to spend some hours in this Court in Laughing and Divertisement; but if they take up the Matter in earnest, none but you Deviners know what will be the Event of it.

Eut. Perhaps you may sustain no damage, but may

* *Socrates* makes use of the Confession which he has drawn out of *Eutyphron*, to show by this Deviner the Character of those who were set up to teach Religion. They neither taught, nor refused anything, but through fear lest the People in Superstition and Ignorance,

come

come to a happy Issue in your Business, as well as I in mine.

Soc. Have you business here then? are you Defendant or Plaintiff?

Eut. I am Plaintiff.

Soc. Whom do you prosecute?

Eut. If I should tell you, you would take me for a Fool.

Soc. How! Do you prosecute one that can't be taken? Has he got Wings?

Eut. The Person I prosecute, instead of having Wings, is so old that he can scarce walk.

Soc. Who is he?

Eut. 'Tis my Father.

Soc. Your Father!

Eut. Yes my Father.

Soc. Of what do you accuse him?

Eut. Of Murder.

Soc. Of Murder, good God! That's an Accusation indeed above the comprehension of the People, who will never conceive that it can be just: an ordinary Man would have enough to do to give it any tolerable Colour. * This is a thing that belongs only to him who is arriv'd at the highest pitch of Wisdom.

Eut. You say true, *Socrates*, it belongs only to such a Person.

Soc. Is it any one of your Relations that your Father has kill'd? Without doubt it must be so; for you would not prosecute your Father in a Court of Justice for the sake of a Stranger.

Eut. What an Absurdity is that, *Socrates*, to think that in this respect there is any difference between a Relation and a Stranger! The thing is equal; that which ought chiefly to be consider'd, is to examine whether the Person that has kill'd him, did

A false Principle: for Justice push'd too far becomes Injustice and Impiety.

* From this Principle of *Socrates* it follows by a just consequence, that it is only God's Province to command and authorize such Actions as appear severe and cruel to Nature, which is a great Truth.

it justly or unjustly. If it was justly, he ought not to be put to any trouble, but if unjustly, you are oblig'd to prosecute him, whatever Friendship or Relation there is between you. To have the least Conversation with him is to make your self an Accomplice of his Crime, and so it is not to prosecute him to bring him to Punishment, which alone can purifie and expiate you both. But to apprize you of the Fact. The deceased was one of our Farmers, who rented a piece of Land of us when we dwelt at *Naxos*: This Man having one day drank too much fell into a passion, and was so transported with Rage against one of our Slaves that he kill'd him. My Father order'd him to be cast into a deep Pit with his Hands and Feet bound, and immediately sent hither to consult * one of those who have the Inspection of Religious Matters, and Cases of Conscience, to know what he should do with him, and in the mean time neglected this poor Prisoner, and left him without sustenance, as an Assassin whose Life was of no Consequence; so that he dyed: Hunger, Cold and the Weight of his Chains kill'd him, before the Person my Father had sent return'd. Upon this our whole Family falls upon me, because I for the sake of an Assassin, accuse my Father of Murder, which they pretend he has not committed; and if he had, they maintain I ought not to prosecute him, because the deceased was a Villain and a Murderer, and besides they say 'tis an impious Action for a Son to prefer a Criminal Process against his Father; so blind are they about divine things, and so incapable of discerning what is Profane and Impious, from what is Just and Holy.

Soc. But, I pray, *Eutyphron*, do you your self think you so accurately understand all Divine things, and that you can so precisely distinguish between what

* In Greece there were Interpreters of divine things, who were publick Persons, to whom the People address'd themselves in all weighty Cases. Those who were any thing devout would not undertake the least thing without having first consulted them.

is Holy, and what is Profane, that the State of the Case being as you say, you can prosecute your Father without fearing to commit an impious Action?

Eut. Else I should be very uneasy; and *Eutyphron* would scarce have any advantage above other Men, if he did not understand all these things perfectly well.

Soc. O admirable *Eutyphron*, I see then the best Course I can take, is to become your Disciple, and before the Determination of my Process, to let *Melitus* know, that I have hitherto look'd upon it as the greatest advantage in the World, to have a good Understanding in Divine Things, and to be well instructed in Religion; but now seeing he accuses me of falling into Error, and of rashly introducing new Opinions about the Deity, I have put my self into your School. So that, *Melitus* (I'll say) if you acknowledge *Eutyphron*, to be a Person of Ability in those Matters, and that he has good Notions; I declare to you I have embrac'd the same Sentiments. Therefore forbear to prosecute me any farther. And if on the contrary, you think *Eutyphron* is not Orthodox, cause the Master to be call'd in question before you meddle with the Scholar; he is the cause of all this Mischief, 'tis he that ruins both his Father and Me. He ruins me in teaching me a false Religion, and he ruins his Father in prosecuting him by the Principles of this same Religion, which you account so pernicious; and if he continues to prosecute me without any regard to my Request, or leaves me to pursue you, you will not fail to make your Appearance, and to speak the same thing which I shall have signified to him.

'Tis the greatest Advantage in the World to be well instructed in Religion.

Eut. Upon my Word, *Socrates*, if he is so impudent as to attack me, I shall soon find his weak side, and shall at least run but half the Danger.

Soc. I know it very well, and that is the reason I am so desirous of being your Disciple, being well assur'd, that no Person is so bold as to dare look

you in the face; no not *Melitus* himself; who looks so intently, and who can see so well to the bottom of my Soul, that he accuses me of Impiety.

In the mean time then, tell me, I beseech you what you just now affirm'd, and which you know so well, *viz.* what is Holy and Just, Impious and Unjust, in respect of *killing Men* for Instance, and so in all other Subjects that may offer themselves to us. Is not Sanctity always like it self in all sorts of Actions, and is not Impiety, which is it's contrary, always the same too, so that the same Idea, the same Character of Impiety is always found in every thing which is impious?

Eut. 'Tis certainly so, *Socrates*.

Soc. What is it then that you call Pious and Holy, Profane and Impious?

Eut. I call that Pious and Holy, for Example, which I am doing to day, namely to prosecute every Man who commits Murder, Sacrilege, and such other Crimes, whether it be Father, Mother, Brother, or any other Person. And I call it an impious thing to suffer the Criminal quietly to enjoy his Crime. I pray, *Socrates*, mind well what I say; I'll give you very certain Proofs, that my Definition is * conformable to the Law. I have already mention'd it to many Persons, and have made 'em confess, that there is nothing more just, than not to spare a wicked Man, let him be who he will: All Men are convinc'd that *Jupiter* is the best and most just of all the Gods, and all agree, that he put his Father in Chains, because he, contrary to all manner of Justice devour'd his Children. *Saturn* had before treated his Father with yet greater Severity for some other Fault. And yet People cry out against me, when I prosecute my Father for an Atrocious Act of Injustice; and they fall into a manifest Contradicti-

* 'Tis so indeed; but it is ill applied here; and is not true on all Occasions, as it is not on this. That which *Eutypbron* here calls the Law, is the Law of Nature, which teaches us to imitate God in all we know of him.

A wrong
Definition
which
springs from
blind Zeal.

on, in judging so differently of the Actions of those Gods, and mine, * in which I had no other design than that of imitating them.

Soc. Is this the thing, *Eutyphron*, which has brought me to day to this Bar; because when I am told these Tales of the Gods I can't hear 'em without Pain? Is this the Crime with which I am going to be charg'd? If you who are so able in Matters of Religion agree with the People in this, and believe these Stories 'tis absolutely necessary that I should believe 'em too, who confess ingenuously that I know nothing of these Matters; shall I pretend to be wiser than my Teachers, and make head against them? Therefore I beg of you in the name of that God who presides over Friendship, do not deceive me, do you believe all these things you say?

Eut. I not only believe these, but others too that are more surprizing, of which the People are wholly ignorant. *Doubtless he means those Mysteries which were known only to those that were initiated.*

Soc. You seriously believe then that there are great Quarrels, Animosities and Wars among the Gods? You believe all those others Passions reign among 'em, which are so surprizing, and are represented by Poets and Painters in their Poems and Pictures, which are expos'd to view in all parts of our Temples; and † are wrought with various Colours in that mysterious Tapistry, which is carried in procession to the Citadel every fifth Year, during the *Panathœnea*? must we receive all these things as so many great Truths, *Eutyphron*. *The Feast of Minerva.*

Eut. Not only these, *Socrates*, but a great many others besides, as I told you just now, which I will

* The imitation of those false Gods could only produce very ill Actions, as the Poets themselves have acknowledged.

† This Tapistry was the Sail of *Minerva's* Ship, on which the Principal Actions of this Goddess were describ'd in Needle-work; which after it had been expos'd in the Ship at the beginning of the Feast, was carried in Procession. The Ship was roll'd along on firm Ground to the Temple of *Ceres* at *Eleusine*, from whence it was brought back, and carried to the Citadel; and the Statue of the Goddess was at last adorn'd with it.

explain to you if you please; and upon my word they'll make you wonder.

Soc. No, they will not make me wonder much, but you may explain 'em to me another time when you are more at leisure; I pray endeavour now to explain to me what I ask'd you, a little more clearly; for you have not yet fully answer'd my Question, you have not taught me what Holiness is. You have only told me that that is a holy thing which you do in accusing your Father of Murder.

Eut. And I have told you the Truth,

Soc. It may be so; but are there not a great many other things which you call Holy?

Eut. Without doubt there are.

Soc. I intreat you therefore to remember that what I ask'd you was not to teach me one or two holy Things among a great many others that are so too; but to give me a clear and distinct Idea of the Nature of Holiness, and of that which causes all holy Things to be holy. For you told me your self, that there is only one and the same Character which makes all holy Things to be what they are; as there is one that makes Wickedness to be always Wickedness: don't you remember it?

Eut. O ho, yes, I remember it.

Soc. Then teach me to know what this Character is, that I may have it always before my Eyes, and may use it as the true Model, and real Original, that so I may be in a Condition to affirm of every thing which I see you or others do, that that which resembles it is holy, and that which does not resemble it is wicked.

Eut. If that's it you desire, *Socrates*, I am ready to satisfy you. *Soc.* Truly that's what I would have,

*A Second
Definition of
Holiness.*

Eut. I say then that Holiness is that which is agreeable to the Gods, and Wickedness is that which is disagreeable to 'em.

Soc. Very well, *Eutypbron*, you have at last answer'd me precisely according to my Question. But I don't yet know whether you speak true: However
surely

surely you will know how to convince me of the Truth of what you advance.

Eut. I'll answer you.

Soc. Come then, let us lay down what we say plainly. A holy Thing, or a holy Man, is a Thing, or a Man that is agreeable to God; a wicked Thing, or a wicked Man, is a Man, or Thing that is disagreeable to him; thus what is Holy and what is Wicked are directly opposite; are they not?

Eut. That's beyond contradiction.

Soc. I think this is very well lay'd down.

Eut. I think so too, *Socrates*.

Soc. But have we not also affirm'd that * the Gods have frequent Animosities and Contentions among themselves, and are often embroil'd and divided one against another?

Eut. Yes, without doubt.

Soc. Therefore let us now examine what may be the Occasion of that difference of Sentiments that produces those Quarrels and that Enmity among 'em. If you and I should dispute about Numbers, to know which was the greater, would this difference make us Enemies, and carry us to all manner of Excesses and Violences? Should we not immediately set our selves to reckon, that we might presently be of the same Mind?

Eut. 'Tis very true, we should so.

Soc. And if we should dispute about the different bigness of Bodies, should we not presently go about measuring 'em, and would not that soon put an end to our Dispute?

Eut. It would so.

Soc. And if we should contest about Weight, would not our Difference be soon determin'd by means of a pair of Scales?

Eut. No doubt of it.

Soc. Well then, what is there, about which, if we should come to dispute without having a certain Rule to which we might recur, we should be-

* *Socrates* refutes this Definition of Holiness, by shewing that it can't subsist with their Theology.

come

come irreconcilable Enemies, and fall into an extravagant Passion one against the other? Perhaps none of these things at present occurs to your Mind. I'll tell you some of 'em, and you shall judge whether I am in the right. Is it not what is Just and Unjust, Comely and Indecent, Good and Evil? Are not these the things about which we every day differ, and not finding a sufficient Rule to make us accord, we fall into the greatest Enmity? When I say *We* I speak of all Mankind in general.

Eut. That indeed is the true Cause of all our Law-suites, and all our Wars.

Soc. And if it be true, that the Gods are at Variance among themselves about any thing, must it not necessarily be some one of these?

Eut. It must needs be so.

Soc. * According to you then, Excellent *Eutypbron*, the Gods are divided about what is Just and Unjust, Comely and Indecent; Good and Evil. For if they did not contest about these things, they would have no occasion of wrangling, but would be always united; would they not? *Eut.* You say very right.

Soc. And the things which each God takes to be Comely, Good and Just, are lov'd by him, and the contrary hated.

Eut. Most certainly.

Soc. According to you then one and the same thing seems Just to some of them and Unjust to others, seeing Wars and Seditions are stir'd up among 'em by such Disputes as these. Is it not so?

Eut. 'Tis so without doubt.

Soc. Hence it follows, that one and the same thing is the object both of the Love and Hatred of the Gods, and is at the same time pleasing and displeasing to 'em.

Eut. So it seems.

Soc. And consequently, according to you, what is Holy and Profane are the same thing.

Eut. I grant, this consequence may be Just.

* *Socrates* handsomly ridicules those Gods, who know not what Justice and Injustice, Vice and Vertue are.

Soc.

Soc. Than you have not answer'd my Question, Incomparable *Eutyphron*; for I did not ask you what it was that at the same time was Holy and Profane, Pleasing and Displeasing to the Gods. So that I foresee 'tis possible without a Miracle, that the Action you are about to day in prosecuting your Father to bring him to Punishment, may please *Jupiter*, and at the same time may displease *Cælus* and *Saturn*; may be approv'd by *Vulcan*, and disapprov'd by *Juno*, and so of the rest of the Gods who may be of different Sentiments.

Eut. But *Socrates*, I suppose there's no dispute about this among the Gods, nor does any one of 'em pretend, that he who has kill'd a Man unjustly should be suffer'd to go unpunish'd.

Soc. Neither is there any Man that pretends to that: Did you ever see any one that dar'd put the matter in Question, whether he that had willfully murder'd a Man, or committed any other Act of Injustice, ought to be punish'd or not?

Eut. We every where hear and see scarce any thing else before the Tribunals but Persons who have committed Acts of Injustice, saying and doing what they can to avoid Punishment.

Soc. But do the Persons of whom you speak, *Eutyphron*, confess that they have done those Acts of Injustice of which they are accus'd; and after this Confession maintain that they ought not to be punish'd?

Eut. They have no Mind to confess so, *Socrates*.

Soc. Then they do not say and do all they can; for they dare neither maintain nor assert, that when their Injustice is manifest, and sufficiently attested, they ought not to be chastiz'd for it. Is it not so?

Eut. 'Tis very true.

Soc. They don't put the Matter in Question, whether he that is guilty of Injustice ought to be punish'd; No body doubts of that; but that about which they dispute is the Nature of Injustice, to determine in what, how, and on what Occasion it is committed.

Eut.

Eut. That's certain.

Soc. And is it not the same in Heaven, if it be true, as you have asserted that the Gods are at Variance about what is Just and Unjust? Do not some of 'em affirm that others of 'em are Unjust, and don't the latter maintain the Contrary. For there is not one among them no more than among us who dares advance such a Notion as this, that he that commits Injustice ought not to be punish'd.

Eut. All you say is true, *Socrates*, at least in general.

Soc. You may say in particular too. For 'tis about particular Actions that both Men and Gods dispute every day; if it be true that the Gods dispute about any thing: Do not some say such an Action is Just, and others that 'tis Unjust?

Eut. Yes Doubtless.

Soc. Come then, my dear *Eutyphron*, for my particular Instruction tell me what certain Proof you have that the Gods all disapprove the Death of your Farmer, who after he had so barbarously knock'd his fellow servant on the head, was laid in Irons, and so perish'd before your Father had receiv'd the answer which he expected from *Athens*. Demonstrate to me that on this occasion 'tis a pious and just Action for a Son to accuse his Father of Murder, and to endeavour to bring him to Punishment for it; and see if you can fairly and evidently prove to me, that the Action of such a Son is pleasing to the Gods. If you do this I shall never cease to admire and celebrate your Capacity as long as I live.

Eut. This is somewhat difficult indeed; to prove it to you. For my part I could prove it as evidently as —————

Soc. I understand you. That is to say, You think I have a duller head than any of your Judges; for as to them, there's no difficulty in the Case, you'll make it appear to them that your Farmer was unjustly kill'd, and that all the Gods disapprove your Father's Action.

Eut.

Eut. I'll make it appear to 'em as clear as the Light. provided they will but hear me.

Soc. Oh! They will not fail to hear you, * provided you make a fine Speech to 'em. But I'll tell you what Reflection I just now made, while I was hearkning to what you said; I said within my self; suppose it were possible for *Eutyphron* to persuade me that all the Gods are of the Mind that this Farmer was unjustly kill'd; should I be ever the wiser, should I understand, better than I do, what is Holy and what Profane? The Death of this Farmer is displeasing to the Gods, as he pretends, I'll grant it; but this is not a definition of what is Holy, and its contrary, seeing the Gods are divided; and that which is disagreeable to some of them is agreeable to others: Very well, I pass that, *Eutyphron*: I am willing to suppose that all the Gods account your Father's Action unjust, and that they all abhor it: I pray then let us correct our Definition a little, and say, *That which all the Gods condemn is Profane, and that which all the Gods approve is Holy: and that which is approv'd by some of 'em, and disapprov'd by others, is neither one nor t'other, or rather is both together.* Shall we stand by this Definition of what is Holy and what Profane?

Eut. What should hinder us, *Socrates*?

Soc. For my part I'll not hinder it; but do you see your self if this suites your Opinion; and if upon this Principle you can instruct me better in what you have been endeavouring to teach me.

Eut. And for my part I shall make no Difficulty of asserting, that that is Holy which all the Gods approve, and that Profane, which they all disapprove.

Soc. Examine this Definition to see if it be true, or shall we receive it without any Ceremony? and

* *Socrates* reproaches the Athenians, that they lov'd to hear such as could talk finely, and did not much trouble their Heads about the Truth of Things: We learn from the Sacred History that this was the Character of the Athenians; they spent their Time in hearing either Novelists or Orators.

shall

shall we have that respect for our selves and others, as to give our Assent to all our Imaginations and Fancies; so that for a Man to tell us a thing is so, shall be sufficient to gain our Belief; or is it necessary to examine what is said to us?

Eut. Without doubt we should examine it; and I am well assur'd that what we have laid down is a good Position.

Soc. That we shall see presently. Hear me a little. * Is that which is Holy lov'd of the Gods, because it is Holy, or is it Holy, because it is lov'd of 'em?

Eut. I don't well understand what you say, *Socrates*.

Soc. I'll endeavour to explain my self. Don't we say, that a thing is carried, and that a thing carries; that a thing is seen, and that a thing sees; that a thing is mov'd, and that a thing moves it? and the like to Infinity? Do you conceive that they are different? and do you understand in what they differ?

Eut. I think I do.

Soc. Is not the thing lov'd different from that which loves?

Eut. A pretty Question indeed!

Soc. Tell me then is the thing, which is carried, carried because one carries it; or for some other Reason?

Eut. Because one carries it; without doubt.

Soc. And the thing mov'd is mov'd because one moves it; and the thing seen because one sees it?

Eut. Most certainly,

* This Thought is too high for *Eutyphron*, who conceiving Holiness as a thing distinct from God, could not tell how to comprehend that which is Holy is at the same time lov'd of God, because it is Holy; and Holy because lov'd of God: For Holiness comes from God, *Sanctitas primitiva*; and the Holiness of Men is the effect of the Divine Communion; which *Socrates* understood, and of which he elsewhere speaks. So that *Socrates* here speaks with reference to the gross manner of conceiving the things of Religion which was to be found in ignorant Men; who judg'd of this as of all other things in which the Relatives are very different, as that which is lov'd is different from that which loves, that which is moved is different from that which moves it, &c.

Soc.

Soc. Then it is not true that one sees a thing because it is seen, but on the contrary 'tis seen because one sees it. 'Tis not true that one moves a thing because 'tis mov'd, but it is mov'd because one moves it: Nor is it true, that one carries a thing because 'tis carried, but 'tis carried because one carries it: Do you understand me now? Is this plain enough? My meaning is, that one does not do a thing because it is done, but that it is done because one does it? that a Being which suffers does not suffer because it is passive; but is passive because it suffers. Is not this true?

Eut. Who doubts it?

Soc. Is not that which is lov'd something that is done, or that suffers?

Eut. Certainly.

Soc. Then 'tis with that which is lov'd as 'tis with all other things; 'tis not because it is lov'd that one loves it, but one the contrary 'tis because one loves it that it is lov'd.

Eut. That's as clear as the Light.

Soc. What shall we say then of that which is Holy, my dear *Eutyphron*? shall we not say, it is belov'd of the Gods, as you have asserted?

Eut. Yes certainly.

Soc. But is it belov'd because it is Holy, or is it for some other Reason?

Eut. 'Tis for no other Reason.

Soc. Then it is belov'd because it is Holy; but it is not Holy because it is belov'd.

Eut. So I think.

Soc. But is it not belov'd of the Gods because the Gods love it?

Eut. Who can deny it?

Soc. * Then that which is belov'd of God is not the same with that which is Holy, nor that which

* This is evident, seeing what is Holy is lov'd only because it is Holy; and that which is lov'd is lov'd only because one loves it, there must needs be a difference between these two, viz. what is Lov'd and what is Holy.

*It is belov'd
so far as
it is Holy.
'Tis this
Quality that
renders it
aimable.*

is Holy the same with that which is belov'd, as you say; but they are very different.

Eut. How then, *Socrates*?

Soc. Because we are agreed that that which is Holy is belov'd because it is Holy, and that it is not true that it is Holy because it is belov'd; are we not agreed in that?

Eut. I confess it.

Soc. We are farther agreed that that which is belov'd of the Gods is belov'd of 'em only because they love it; and that it is not true, to say they love it, because it is belov'd.

Eut. That's right.

Soc. * But, my dear *Eutyphron*, if that which is belov'd of the Gods, and that which is Holy were the same thing, seeing that which is Holy is belov'd only because it is Holy, It would follow that the Gods should love that which they love, only because it is belov'd of 'em: And on the other hand, if that which is belov'd of the Gods were lov'd only because they love it, than it would be true likewise to say, that which is Holy, is Holy, only because 'tis belov'd of them. By this therefore you see that those two terms, *belov'd of the Gods* and *Holy* are very different. One is belov'd because the Gods love him, and another is lov'd only because he deserves to be lov'd. Thus, my dear *Eutyphron*, when you should have given me an exact answer what it is to be Holy, to be sure you were not willing to explain to me wherein the Essence of it consists by an accurate Definition, but were content to shew one of its Qualities, which is that of being belov'd of the Gods, but you have not given me an Account of the Nature of it. I conjure you therefore, if you think fit, discover this great secret to me, and beginning with it from its very Principle, teach me precisely to know what *Holiness* is, without having respect to any thing

* For if these two Terms *Belov'd* and *Holy* were the same thing, one might be put for 't'other, whence all that Absurdity would follow which *Socrates* represents here.

that

that is adventitious, as whether it be belov'd of the Gods or not. For we shall have no dispute about that. Come then, tell me freely; what is it to be *Holy*, and what to be *Profane*.

Eut. But, *Socrates* I know not how to explain my Thoughts to you on this Subject; for all that we lay down vanishes from us, and does not continue fix'd and stable in what Condition soever we put it.

Soc. All the Principles, *Eutyphron*, which you have establish'd are somewhat like* the Figures of *Dedalus* one of my Ancestors. If I had assert'd 'em to be sure you would not have fail'd to jeer and reproach me, as if I had deriv'd this pretty Quality of making things that slip out of a Man's Hands, when he thinks he holds 'em fastest: But it unhappily falls out that 'tis you that have assert'd 'em. Therefore I must seek for some other turns of Raillery, for 'tis certain your Principles give us the slip, as you see very well.

Eut. For my part, *Socrates*, I need not seek any other turn of Raillery: that suites you perfectly well: for 'tis not I that inspire our reasonings with this Instability, which hinders 'em from fixing, but you are the *Dedalus*. If I were alone, I tell you they would continue firm and steady.

Soc. Then I am more expert in my Art than *Dedalus* was, he could only give this Mobility to his own Works; whereas it seems I give it not only to my own, but also to those of other Men: and that which is yet more strange is that I am thus expert against my will; for I should much rather choose

* *Dedalus* was an excellent Carver, who made Statues that had Springs within 'em, by means of which they would start out and go along as if they had been alive. There were two sorts of 'em, as appears by what is said in *Menon*. What *Socrates* says here of *Dedalus*, that he was one of his Ancestors, is only in Raillery. *Dedalus* descended from the Kings of *Athens*; and *Socrates* was very far from having the Vanity of pretending to be of that Family. His meaning is only this, that he knew how to make himself Wings, as *Dedalus* did, to fly towards Heaven, and to raise his Mind to the knowledg of divine Things. This Matter was spoken of in the first *Alcibiades*.

For when one knows the Nature of a thing, one may easily know whether it be lov'd or hated of God.

to have my Discourses continue fix'd and unmovable, than to have all the Riches of *Tantalus* together with all the Skill of *Dedalus* my Progenitor. But enough of this Jestings. Seeing you are affraid of the Trouble, I'll endeavour to ease you, and to open a shorter way to conduct my self to the knowledge of what is Holy. And you shall see if it does not appear to be of absolute necessity that whatever is Holy is Just. *Eut.* It cannot be otherwise.

Soc. Do you think whatever is Just is Holy, or whatever is Holy is Just? or do you suppose that that which is Just is not always Holy; but only that there are some Just things that are Holy, and others which are not so?

Eut. I can't well comprehend what you mean, *Socrates*.

Soc. And yet you have two great Advantages above me; having both more Youth, and more Capacity than I. But, as I just now told you, swimming in the Delicious abundance of your Wisdom, you are affraid of putting your self to much trouble. Shake off, I beseech you, this effeminate Softness, and apply your self a little to thinking; what I say is not very hard to be understood. For I say just the contrary to what the Poet asserts, who to excuse himself for not singing the Praises of *Jupiter*, says,

Shame every where keeps company with Fear.

I am not at all of his Mind; shall I tell you in what?

Eut. You'll oblige me in so doing.

Soc. I think 'tis not true that Shame always accompanies Fear; for I think we every Day see People in Fear of Sicknes and Poverty, who yet are not at all asham'd of the things they fear. Don't you think so too?

Eut. I am of the same Mind.

Soc. On the contrary Fear always follows Shame; for is there any one who is asham'd, and put into Confusion by any Action, who does not at the same time fear the dishonour that is the Consequence of it?

Eut. It can't be otherwise, he must be affraid of it.

Soc.

Soc. Then it is not true to say,

Shame every where keeps company with Fear,
But we should say,

Fear every where keeps company with Shame.

for 'tis false that shame is continually found with fear, fear having more extent than shame : indeed shame is one part of fear, as the unequal is one part of Number. Wherever you find a number you do not necessarily find it unequal ; but wherever it is unequal, there you necessarily find a Number. Do you understand me now ?

Eut. Very well.

Soc. This is what I just now ask'd you ; viz. if wherever that which is Just is to be found, there is also that which is Holy ; and if wherever that which is Holy is to be found, there is also that which is Just ? Now it appears that that which is Holy is not always found with that which is Just ; for that which is Holy is a part of that which is Just. Shall we then lay this down as a Principle, or are you of a different Sentiment ?

Eut. 'Tis a Principle that can't be contested.

Soc. Now mind what follows : if that which is Holy is a part of that which is Just ; we must find out what part of that which is Just that which is Holy is. As if you should ask me what part of Number is that which is equal, and what Number is it ? I should answer, that it is * the *Isocele*, and not the *Scalene* : Don't you think so as well as I ?

Eut. Yes certainly.

Soc. Now do you in like manner see if you can inform me what part of that which is just that which is Holy is ; that I may let *Melitus* know, that 'tis best for him to forbear to do me any farther Injustice in accusing me of Impiety, me, who, I say, have been perfectly instructed by you what Piety and Holiness, and their Contraries are.

* The *Isocele* signifies that which has two equal sides, for the even Number divides it self into two equal parts. And the *Scalene* is that which has two unequal Sides.

*A third
Definition
which at
bottom has
something of
Truth in it,
but these
false Teach-
ers had not
right Con-
ceptions of
it.*

Eut. For my part, *Socrates*, I think that Holiness and Piety is † that part of what is Just which concerns the Care and Worship of the Gods, and that all the rest of it is that which properly respects Men.

Soc. Very well: Yet there is some little Matter still wanting. For I do not well understand what you mean by this Word [*Care*] Is this Care of the Gods the same with that which we take about all other things? For we every day say, that none but a *Querry* knows how to take care of a Horse, and to look well after him, do we not?

Eut. Yes doubtless.

Soc. Then the Care of Horses properly belongs to the *Querry's* Art.

Eut. It does so.

Soc. All Men are not fit to take care of Dogs, and to look after them, but only the Hunts-man.

Eut. None but he.

Soc. Then the Care of Dogs properly belongs to the Art of Hunting.

Eut. Without doubt it does.

Soc. And it belongs to the *Grazier* to take care of Oxen.

Eut. True.

Soc. Now Holiness and Piety is the Care of the Gods; Is not this what you say?

Eut. Yes, certainly.

Soc. Has not all Care for its end, the good and advantage of that which is taken care of? Don't you every day see that the Horses which an able *Querry* takes Care of become better, and more fit for service than others?

Eut. Yes, without doubt.

Soc. Does not the care which a good Hunts-man takes of Dogs, and that which a good *Grazier*

† This is true: but the Pagans had false Ideas of it; because they did not understand that this care of God which consists on our part in obeying him, in conforming to his holy Will, and in resigning our selves to him, was preceded by his care of us in creating us, and in enlightening our Minds; and this is what *Socrates* teaches in other places.

ta kes

takes of Oxen make both the one and the other better? and may not the like be said of all other Care? Or can you think that Care tends to hurt and spoil that which is taken care of? *Eut.* No certainly.

Soc. Then it tends to make it better.

Eut. That's right.

Soc. Then Holiness being the Care we take of the Gods, tends to their Advantage; and so the end of it must be to make 'em better. But would you dare to assert when you do any holy Action, that you make any one of the Gods better by it?

Men are incapable of doing any thing to the advantage of God.

Eut. I am far enough from uttering such horrid Blasphemy.

Soc. Nor do I think you have any such Thought; I am very far from such a Supposition: and 'tis for this Reason I ask'd you what this Care of the Gods is, being persuaded that was not your meaning.

Eut. You have done me Justice, *Socrates*,

Soc. So much for that: But tell me then, what sort of Care of the Gods is Holiness?

Eut. 'Tis of the Nature of that Care which Servants take of their Masters.

Soc. I understand you, that is to say, Holiness is a kind of Servant to the Gods.

Eut. You hit it.

Soc. Can you tell me what Physicians operate by Means of the Art of Medicine which is their Servant? Do not they restore Health?

Eut. Yes.

Soc. What do the Ship-Carpenters, who are in Ports do; and what do our Architects perform by the Ministry of their Servant? Don't the former build Ships and the latter Houses?

Eut. Yes certainly.

Soc. * What then do the Gods perform by the Ministry of their Servant? For you must certainly know

* *Socrates* would hereby insinuate what he elsewhere teaches, that God by the Ministry of Holiness works the Conversion of Souls, that this Conversion produces Love, and that this Love engages us to render him that which appertains to him, and which we cannot innocently refuse him.

this, since you pretend to know Religion better than any Man in the World beside.

Eut. And I have Reason to make that pretence.

Soc. Tell me then, I beseech you, what wonderful work is it that the Gods perform by making use of our Service ?

Eut. They perform many very great and wonderful things.

Soc. The Generals of our Army perform many great Things too ; but yet there is always one thing that is the Principal, and that is the Victory they obtain in Battel ; Is it not ?

Eut. 'Tis so.

Soc. And the Graziers do many good things, but the Principal is that of supplying Mankind with Food by their Labour. *Eut.* I grant it.

Soc. Well then, of all those good Things which the Gods operate by the Ministry of our Holiness, what is the Principal ?

Eut. I just now told you, *Socrates*, that there needs more time and pains to arrive at an accurate knowledge of all these Things. All that I can tell you in general, is, that to please the Gods by Prayers and Sacrifices, is that which we call Holiness. And * in this consists the Welfare of Families and Cities, whereas to displease the Gods, is Impiety which utterly ruins and subverts every thing.

Soc. Indeed, *Eutyphron*, you might have told me what I ask'd in fewer words, if you had pleas'd. 'Tis easy to see you have no Mind to instruct me, for when you seem to be just in the way to do it, you presently strike off again ; if you had but answer'd me a Word more, I had very well understood the Nature of Holiness. But now, (for he that asks must follow him who is ask'd) don't you say, Holiness is the Art of sacrificing and praying ? *Eut.* Yes that I do.

Soc. To sacrifice, is to give to the Gods. To pray is to ask of 'em. *Eut.* 'Tis right, *Socrates*.

* In what the Safety or Ruine of Families, Cities and States consists, even by the Confession of the blindest Pagans.

Soc.

Soc. It follows then from your Discourses, that Holiness is * the Science of giving to the Gods, and asking of them.

A fourth Definition which is very true; but the Truth of which these false Teachers did not understand.

Eut. Socrates, you perfectly comprehend my meaning.

Soc. 'Tis because I am in love with your Wisdom, and give my self up entirely to it. You need not fear that I shall let one of your Words fall to the Ground. Tell me then what is this Art of pleasing the Gods? Do you say it is to give to 'em and to ask of 'em?

Eut. Most certainly.

Soc. To ask well, must we not ask such things as we have need to receive of them?

Eut. And what then?

Soc. And to give well, must we not give them in exchange such Things as they have need to receive of us? For it would be a Folly to give any one such Things as he does not want, but are entirely useless to him.

Eut. You say very well.

Soc. Holiness, my dear *Eutyphron*, is then a kind of Traffick betwixt the Gods and Men.

Eut. Let it be so, if you will have it so.

Soc. I would not have it so, if it be not so: But tell me, what advantage do the Gods receive from the Presents which we make 'em? For the advantage we derive from them is very evident since we have not the least Good, but what proceeds from their Liberality. Of what advantage then are our Offerings to the Gods? Are we so crafty, as to draw all the Profit of this Commerce to our selves, while they derive no Advantage from it?

All the Goods of Men come from Gods.

Eut. Socrates, do you think the Gods can ever draw any advantage from the Things they receive from us?

* This fourth Definition is admirable. *Socrates* designs by it to shew that Holiness leads us to ask of God, his Spirit, his Assistance and Grace; and to ask even our selves of him; for 'tis on him our very Being depends; and that it also engages us to give our selves to him. And this makes up the whole of Religion.

Soc. To what purpose then do all our Offerings serve?

Eut. They serve to signifie our Veneration, and Respect to 'em, and the desire we have to please 'em.

Soc. Then Holiness does not profit, but please the Gods?

Eut. Yes without doubt.

Soc. Then that which is Holy is only that which pleases the Gods.

Eut. 'Tis only that.

Soc. When you speak thus to me, do you wonder that your Discourse is not fix'd and steady; and dare you accuse me of being the *Dedalus*, that gives it this continual Motion; You, I say, who are a thousand times more ingenious than that great Artift, and give your Words a thousand different Turns? Don't you find that your Discourse makes only a Circle. You remember very well, that that which is Holy and that which is agreeable to the Gods were not counted the same Thing by us just now; but were acknowledg'd to be very different. Don't you remember this?

Eut. I do.

Soc. Well, and don't you consider that you now say, that which is Holy is that which pleases the Gods. Is not what pleases 'em agreeable to 'em?

Eut. Most certainly.

Soc. Then one of these two Things must be granted. Either that we did not well distinguish just now; or if we did, that we are now fallen into a false definition.

Eut. That's plain.

Soc. Then we must begin all again, in our enquiry after Holiness; for I shall not be weary nor discourag'd till you have inform'd me what it is. I beg you would not despise me; but bend your Mind with all the Application you can to teach me the truth, for you know it, if any Man alive does; and I will not let you go, like another *Proteus*, till you have instructed me. For if you had not a perfect

Know-

Knowledge of what is Holy and Profane, doubtless you would never for the sake of a wretched Farmer have undertaken to accuse your Father of Murder, when the good old Man stoops under the Burden of Age, and has already one Foot in the Grave: But would have been seiz'd with Horrour to see your self about to commit (it may be) an impious Act, and would have fear'd the Gods, and respected Men. So that I cannot doubt but you think you know perfectly well, what Holiness, and its Contrary are. Inform me therefore, most Excellent *Eutyphron*, and do not hide your Thoughts from me,

What it is to fear God, and respect Men.

Eut. We'll reserve it for another time, * for now I am a little in haste, and 'tis time for me to leave you.

Observe the Pride of this Superstitious Man, he is just confounded and yet he always thinks himself capable of teaching what he does not know himself.

Soc. Alas, my dear *Eutyphron*, what do you intend to do! This hasty Motion of yours ravishes from me the greatest and sweetest of all my hopes. For I flatter'd my self, that after I had learn'd of you, what Holiness is, and its Contrary, I should easily have got out of *Melitus* his Clutches, by making it plainly appear to him, that *Eutyphron* had perfectly instructed me in Divine Things, that Ignorance should never more prompt me to introduce of my one Head new Opinions about the Deity; and that my Life should be more holy for the future.

* The Ancients inform us that *Eutyphron* got some advantage by this Conversation of *Socrates*: for he drop'd his Prosecution, and let his Father alone. By which 'tis easy to see, that these Dialogues of *Plato* were not made upon feign'd Subjects, but had a very true and real Foundation, as well as those which *Xenophon* has preserv'd to us.

An

AN ABRIDGMENT
OF THE
First *ALCIBIADES*,
OR
Of the Nature of Man.

A *Lcibiades* was one of the most ambitious and most Haughty Men in the World. His Birth, his Beauty, his Riches, and the Credit of his Tutor *Pe-ricles*, had so puffed him up, that he thought no Person so worthy as himself to command the Athenians, and to go to their first Assembly to get himself declar'd their Captain-General. His proud and arrogant Carriage had driven away all his Lovers, who being taken only with his Beauty, were at length discourag'd by the cold Reception he gave 'em. *Socrates* was the only Person, who loving him more truly than the rest (for he lov'd him only to make him vertuous) could never be wearied out: This makes the beginning of this Dialogue.

Socrates tells *Alcibiades*, that he doubts not but he is surpriz'd to see, that as he was the first, so he is also the last of his Lovers: and that tho he was never troublesome to him, during his tender Youth, he should now follow him every where to discourse with him, without fearing the same disdainful Treatment which he gave his Rivals. *Alcibiades* confesses, he thinks it strange that he should persist in his Affection, and that he can't comprehend upon what Foundation he builds, that he should have any Hope remaining, after all his Rivals had lost theirs. *Socrates* tells him he'll give him an Account of his Reasons,

sons, tho it be a difficult thing to speak to a Person whom one loves, and of whom one is not belov'd. He tells him then, that if he had seen him likely to spend his whole Life in Softness, Laziness, and all the Amusements of Youth, he should have ceas'd loving him. But that as he saw him passionately aspiring after Glory, the love he bore to him was renew'd and augmented; that he came to offer him all necessary Helps, because of all the Lovers he had had, he was the only Person who was able to serve him in his Ambition; and that by this means he might know the difference between such as love only Corporal Beauty, that frail and withering Flower, and one that loves only the Beauty of the Soul, which being perfect is the true Image of the Deity.

This great Promise fixes the restless Humor of this ambitious young Man, and disposes him to hear what he had to say.

Socrates immediatly throws him into the midst of that Assembly, whether he was going to get himself declar'd General of the Athenians; and with abundance of address, shows him, that instead of that great Ability with which he flatter'd himself, he had indeed nothing in him but the Prejudices of his Youth, accompanied with a great deal of Arrogance and Presumption. When you are in that Assembly (says he) you'll rise up to speak without doubt of such Things as you know rather than any other Matters; for otherwise how could you presume to speak? But a Man knows nothing but what he has either found out himself, or learn'd of some other Person. I don't know any thing that you have found out your self, your Knowledge is not by Infusion; and all the Knowledge you have learn'd, is only to write, to play on the Musick, and to perform your Exercises, and none of these Things are talk'd of in the Council. Therefore when will you go? and what will you go for? It must not be when they discourse of Buildings; the meanest Brick-layer would speak better than you on that Subject: Nor must it be when

when they are considering any Prodigies, or any Point of Divination, for that's the Business of the Diviners; and so of other Things.

Alcibiades being press'd, answers, that he'll speak when the Athenians deliberate on their Affairs.

The Matter then in Question, is how to explain what is meant by the Affairs of the Athenians.

Alcibiades says, 'tis Peace and War, and all that belongs to the highest Politicks.

Then, it must be (replies *Socrates*) when they are considering with whom, and at what time 'tis best to be at Peace, or War. But as Masters in all Arts and Sciences seek what is best and most convenient; so in Peace and War, that ought to be sought out which is best and most advantageous, that is to say, most Just; and in order to find it, 'tis necessary to know in what these consist. In what then do they consist?

Alcibiades knows not what to answer. How! (says *Socrates*,) Are you going to the Assembly of the Athenians to give 'em your Advice about Peace and War, and yet know not why War or Peace should be made?

Alcibiades answers, that War is made, either to repel some Insult, or to recover some Good.

This is something (says *Socrates*) but 'tis not all. For 'tis necessary to know, whether the Evil that is done us, is done justly or unjustly; on this Knowledge depends the knowledge of what is best and most advantageous; that which is Best being always most Just. So that on these Matters we ought to have an exact Knowledge of Justice, and to keep it always in view; and this is a thing of which you are ignorant, for of whom should you have learn'd it?

Justice (replies *Alcibiades*) may be known without a Master.

Yes, says *Socrates*, provided it be sought after: But no Man seeks for what he thinks he knows; and at every Degree of our Age we think we know what Justice is, because we speak of it throughout the whole

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whole course of our Life, and nothing is more common than to hear Children complaining of the Wrongs and Injuries that are done 'em. So that we continually speak of Justice without having learn'd what it is either of our selves or others, and consequently without knowing it.

Alcibiades thinks to extricate himself out of this Difficulty by saying he learn'd it of the People.

That's a very bad Master, says *Socrates*, how should the People teach what they know not themselves? They have no Knowledge of Justice but by their Prejudices, as you have; and one certain sign that they are ignorant of it, is, that they are always at variance on this Subject, and that 'tis this difference alone that causes the Wars that desolate the World. For if the People would agree about what is Just, and Unjust, they would always live in Peace.

Alcibiades endeavours to get rid of this Difficulty, in saying that 'tis rarely deliberated in Councils whether a thing is Just or Unjust, but only whether it be Useful; for Justice and Utility (says he) are not always the same things: Seeing some notorious Acts of Injustice have been very advantageous; and a great many Persons have been destroy'd for having acted justly. Which is too true a Draught of the Politicks of most Princes. *Socrates* refutes this mischievous Opinion, and shews, that an Action can't be useful and advantageous, unless it be Comely and Just. He firsts tells him, he could prove to him, by the same Arguments that he had us'd, that he knows not what is useful any more than he does what is just, since he had neither learn'd it of any one, nor found it out of himself. But not to offend a Person so nice and tender; (for *Alcibiades* being accusom'd to the diversified and florid Discourses of the Sophists, did not like to hear the same thing twice, but lov'd Change and Variety in Language as well as in his Clothes) *Socrates* takes another Course, and asks him, if that which is Comely or Honourable is always good, or whether it sometimes ceases to be so.

Alcibiades

Alcibiades answers, that there are Comely and Honourable Things, which are sometimes Evil. For Example, in a Battle, when a Man succours his Friend and is kill'd in the Action, this Action is Honourable but 'tis Fatal. Another abandons his Friend, and escapes danger; this Action is Evil but 'tis useful.

Socrates answers, that the succour a Man gives his Friend is, that which is call'd Valour, which is a thing quite different from Death, and that therefore these ought to be consider'd seperately. So that the Question is whether Valour be a Good or an Evil.

Alcibiades answers, that 'tis a great Good, and that he would not preserve his Life upon the Condition of being a Coward.

Then (says *Socrates*) you confess that Cowardise is a greater Evil than Death: So that Valour is a greater Good than Life, and consequently the Action of succouring one's Friend is good, consider'd as abstracted from all its consequences; if it is Good it is Honourable, and it can't be Honourable, without being useful; for whatsoever is Comely is Good, and that which is Good is Useful; there being nothing that is Comely and Honourable that can be Evil so far as it is Honourable; nor any thing which is Shameful, that can be Good so far as it is Shameful, which he proves by this invincible Argument: Those that do good Actions are happy: Men can't be happy but by the Possession of Good; the Possession of Good is the Consequence of a good Life; therefore Happiness necessarily attends those that do good Actions; so that Happiness is a Comely and Honourable Thing, and consequently that which is good, that which is comely, and that which is useful, are never different one from another. Therefore Justice being Comely and Good can't be oppos'd to Utility.

Alcibiades not only grants all these Truths; but is the Person that affirms 'em; for he is convinc'd by himself, and 'tis himself that makes the Answers. He therefore admires how it comes to pass that the Things about which *Socrates* interrogates him, appear

to him with quite another aspect than they had done before: Hereupon he asks how it comes about, that upon the same Subject he is forc'd to answer sometimes after one manner, and sometimes after another.

Socrates informs him that this proceeds from his Ignorance, because we never contradict our selves in the Things we know; but 'tis impossible for the Mind not to err in those Things of which we are ignorant. But this does not arise absolutely from Ignorance; since 'tis certain we never commit any Fault in Things of which we are ignorant, provided we know our own Ignorance; but it springs from a conceal'd Ignorance, when we think we know what indeed we do not understand. And this was exactly the Case of *Alcibiades*, who was going to intermeddle with Affairs of State in which he had not been instructed. A deplorable Condition! But such as was common to him with almost all that had govern'd the Athenians, only *Pericles* perhaps may be excepted.

Alcibiades observes that *Pericles* did not arrive at so great a Capacity of himself; but had acquir'd his great *Abilities* in the Conversation of Philosophers and Politicians. For still (says he) as old as he is, he converses with *Damon* the greatest of all our Politicians.

Socrates, who perceives the Tendency of this Answer of *Alcibiades*, insinuates to him, that the Company of those great Men was very useful for the Acquirement of Vertue, in which true Accomplishment alone consists. And this he proves by the Example of *Pericles* himself, who had not been able to teach his own Children any thing, a sure sign that Vertue cannot be taught, and that he himself had not learn'd it from Men, because 'tis the Gift of God, and there is nothing of Good in us, but what he implants; but this being too general a Question he reserves it to be treated elsewhere, and confining himself to his Subject, he carries on his Design, which is to confound the Pride of *Alcibiades*. Therefore
he

he asks him how he intends to dispose of himself: *Alcibiades* answers, that he'll endeavour to get himself instructed; but at the same time gives him to understand, that since they who then concern'd themselves in Affairs of State were most of 'em ignorant Persons, he should not be oblig'd to give himself so much trouble to excel 'em; and that since he had good Natural Parts it would be an easy matter for him to out-do 'em.

Socrates amaz'd at the baseness of this Sentiment, which is but too common, gives him an admirable Lesson upon it. He represents to him, that nothing is more unworthy of a great Mind, than for a Man to propose to himself only to surpass ignorant People and Slaves: That a Statesman will never serve his Countrey well, if he is not a greater Man, not only than the Citizens whom he governs, but also than their Enemies; that the Athenians being commonly in War with the Lacedemonians, or the King of *Persia*; he ought to strive to excel those Enemies in Capacity and Vertue.

Alcibiades like a young Spark full of Vanity, asks if the Kings of *Lacedemonia*, and the King of *Persia* were not made like other Men.

Socrates shews him, that if it were so, he ought to form a great Idea of 'em in his Mind; that so he might take the greater care of himself, and render himself still more Accomplish'd. But that there was so little Truth in this, viz. that they were made like other men, that no Persons in the world seem'd so great as they, either for Birth, or Education, or the extent of their Dominions. And to mortify *Alcibiades* the more, he opposes the manner of his Birth and Education to that of the Kings of *Persia*. When a King of *Persia* is born (says *Socrates*) all the People that are spread over that vast Empire celebrate his Nativity, and afterwards that Day is annually kept as one of their greatest Festivals, so that in all the Provinces of *Asia*, nothing is to be seen but Sacrifices and Feasts. Whereas (says he) when we are born, my Dear *Alcibiades*,

cibiades, that Passage of the Comick Poet may be applied to us.

The News scarce to our nearest Neighbours comes.

When the Child is born he is nurs'd under the Conduct of the most vertuous Eunuchs, who shape and fashion his Body. When he is about seven Years of Age they begin to let him see Horses, and to put him under the Care of Querries. He performs his Exercises till he is fourteen, and from that Age they give him four of the greatest, and most vertuous Lords of the Country. The first teaches him Piety; the second forms his Mind to Truth and Justice; the third instructs him to be free, and to conquer his Passions; and the last teaches him to despise Dangers and Death: For if a King should be fearful he would become a Slave. Whereas you *Alcibiades*, have been brought up by a vile *Thracian* Slave, who was good for no other Office, because of his extream old Age. As for Riches, there is still as great a Disproportion; the Lacedemonians being richer than all *Greece* together, and yet having an Estate but like that of a private Man in comparison of the King of *Persia*. In fine (says he) there is so great a disparity in every thing, between these Kings and you, that if one should go and tell the Mother of King *Agis*, or the Mother of *Artaxerxes*, that a Citizen of *Athens*, nam'd *Alcibiades*, was preparing to go and make War in their Country, they would certainly imagine that long Exercise, great Experience, and a consummate Wisdom had inspir'd you with so great a Design. But how would they be surpriz'd, if they should be told that 'tis no such Matter! that you are young, ignorant and presumptuous; that you never would take care to cultivate your Mind, and that you have no other Fund to carry on so great a Design, but your Beauty, your fine Shape, your Extraction, your Riches, and the Advantages of a happy Genius! They would look upon you as a Fool, because in all these things the Lacedemoni-

ans and Persians infinitely surpass us. Is it not a very shameful thing, that the very Women among our Enemies know better than you your self what you ought to be, to attempt to make War against 'em with any hope of Success? Don't think therefore that you have to do with ordinary Men. But imagine you have the greatest Project in the World in your head ; and either renounce your Ambition, or rouse from this Stupidity into which you have cast your self. The Glory with which you are so much charm'd is not acquir'd without a great deal of Toil and Labour ; and if you would attain it you must take care of your self ; that is, you must endeavour to become very good.

But since the Word *Good* is a general Term, that signifies several very different things, the Question is in what such a Man as *Alcibiades* ought to endeavour to become good. He answers, that 'tis in doing those things which the best Citizens ought to do. The best Citizens (he says) are those whom we call wise and prudent ; and Wisdom and Prudence are necessary to all Arts : Thus the Answer of *Alcibiades* is yet too indefinite. Who then are the best Citizens ? *Alcibiades* again answers, that they are those who know how to command Men that live under the same Government, who mutually assist each other ; but what is this Science that teaches how to command Men who make one and the same Political Body, and what is its end ? *Alcibiades* says 'tis good Counsel, and that the end of governing well is to procure the Welfare of the People.

Socrates asks him what ought to be done to govern a State well. *Alcibiades* answers, that Amity and Concord should be made to reign in it.

The Question then is what Art produces this Amity or Concord in States. *Alcibiades* answers, that this is brought about when every Man minds his own Business.

This is not a sufficient Answer, and *Socrates* refutes it with a great deal of Address and Solidity,
by

by showing that when every Man only minds his own Affairs, Amity can't be among 'em, because there's no Concord. For how should they accord about things which are known to some of 'em, and unknown to others?

Alcibiades is so embarrass'd that he is oblig'd to deny a Truth which he had before acknowledg'd, and to confess, that when the Citizens do that which is just, yet they can't tell how to love one another. He does not see what *Socrates* aims at: His Design is to shew, that when Men only mind their Affairs, they take care only of what belongs to themselves, and so confine themselves to the knowledg of particular things, and don't ascend to that of the Essence of universal things, the only knowledg that produces Charity the Mother of Union and Concord: Whereas the knowledg only of particular things, produces Disorder and Division.

So that to make Concord reign in a State, 'tis not enough that every one takes care of what appertains to himself, he must also take care of himself; these being two very different Arts. For the Art by which we take care of our selves is not the same with that by which we take care of that which appertains to us. Now to take care of one's self is to know one's self: But what is it to know one's self? Just as an Artificer uses his Tools, so a Man makes use of his Body. So that the Body is not the Man, for the Body can't use and govern it self. Nor is the Compound the Man, for if one of the things of which we are compounded does not govern, 'tis impossible they should govern both together: And consequently, since neither the Body, nor the compound of Soul and Body together are the Man, it must be the Soul alone: 'Tis then only necessary that we know the Soul, and take care of that, if we would become truly wise. For to take care of our Bodies is to take care of what belongs to us; but to take care of our Souls is to take care of our selves; to be employed with the Care of amassing Riches, is

to be employ'd about things still more remote than those that appertain to us. Thus they who love *Alcibiades* his Body, don't love *Alcibiades* himself, but that which belongs to *Alcibiades*. To love *Alcibiades* is to love his Soul, to love that which is himself, and not that which belongs to him. Therefore we see those that love only his Body, retire from him when the Beauty of this Body is fading; and those who love his Soul, do not cease to love him as long as he is vertuous, and labours by this Means to render himself as lovely as possible; and this (says *Socrates*) is the Cause of the Inconstancy of my Rivals, and of my Steadiness.

But what must we do to come to the sight and knowledg of our Souls? *Socrates* speaks divinely to *Alcibiades* on this occasion. As our Eye, (says he) can't see it self but in the Objects that represent it, or in another Eye; that is, in that part of the Eye, which is the most excellent, namely that wherein the Sight is: So the Soul to see and know it self, must view it self in that part of the Soul in which Wisdom and Vertue are generated, or rather in that Soul, of which ours is but the Image, and in which Wisdom, Vertue and Prudence are found in their sovereign Perfection, that is, in God. For 'tis by this means only that the Soul can know God, and her Self, which is true Wisdom. When she knows her self, she'll also know what belongs to her; for we must first know our Selves before we can know what belongs to us. She'll likewise know whatever respects the things that belong to her, and what respects the things that belong to others. For one Art is sufficient for all this, and this Art is the true sort of Prudence.

He therefore that is ignorant of himself, is ignorant of that which appertains both to himself and others, and not knowing what belongs to others, he knows not what belongs to the Common-wealth, and consequently can't be a good Minister of State. Nay he is not capable to govern a Family, nor so much as

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to conduct himself, for because he is ignorant, 'tis impossible but he must commit faults; in committing faults, he does ill, in doing ill he is miserable, and renders those miserable who obey him. Thus he who is not wise or prudent cannot be happy, and he who is wicked can't but be miserable. So that the happiness of a City depends neither on its Riches, nor the strength of its Fortifications, nor the great number of its Troops, nor its Gallies, nor the magnificence of its Arsenals, but on Vertue, without which there is nothing but Misery in the World.

Therefore to govern a State well, 'tis necessary to provide Vertue for those that compose it, and to endeavour to communicate it to 'em. And consequently, *Alcibiades*, to satisfy your Ambition, you ought not to think of acquiring great Dominion and exorbitant Power, either for your self, or your Republick, but that Justice and Prudence for which you have so much occasion. For while you, and others act justly and prudently, you'll please God, who is the Source of true Felicity; and you'll govern your self after this Manner; if (as I just now told you) you constantly look upon the Deity, that Light in which alone you can know your self and all that belongs to you. But if you govern your self unjustly, and turn away your Eyes from the Deity to unite your self to dark Objects, you'll neither know your self at all, nor the things that belong to you: And your Actions will be nothing but Works of Darknes; and the more Power you have, the more unhappy you'll be. *Alcibiades* can't dissent from these great Truths. But *Socrates* does not stop here; but gives the finishing stroke to mortifie his Pride in asking him, whether it is not more for the Advantage of those who are not yet endued with Vertue, to obey such as are better than themselves, than to be abandon'd to their own Conduct: And (says he) is not that which is most profitable most beautiful, and that which is most beautiful most becoming, and futable? *Alcibiades* agrees to this. Then (says

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Socrates) 'tis becoming that vicious Persons should be Slaves, and be made to obey; and consequently Vice is a base thing, and futable to a Slave, as on the contrary Vertue is beautiful, and futable to a Free-man. In what a Condition then are you?

Alcibiades is sensible what he means, and confesses he is not worthy of any thing but Slavery, but hopes in a little time to get rid of his Vices, *Socrates* pleases.

You don't speak well (replies *Socrates*;) you ought to say, if God pleases, for we can do nothing without him.

Well then (says *Alcibiades*) I say (if God pleases) and I add, let us for the future change Persons; and as you have hitherto made your Court to me, I'll for the future make mine to you. I'll follow you wherever you go, and I solemnly protest to you, I'll now carefully apply my self to Righteousness.

I wish you may (says *Socrates* concluding the Discourse.) But whatever good Opinion I have of you; I am affraid of the Contagion of our Republick, and can't but tremble at the Examples that reign in it, lest they should be too strong for you and me too. For 'tis a very difficult Matter to be wise in the midst of so blind and corrupt a People.

And

An ABRIDGMENT
OF THE
Second *ALCIBIADES*,
OR
Of Prayer.

Socrates meets *Alcibiades* going into a Temple to pray, and seeing him very pensive, and with his Eyes fix'd on the Earth, he asks him on what he was thinking. What should I think on? (replies *Alcibiades* very faintly) being more concern'd about his ambitious Designs than his Prayers. It must be on some very important Matters, (says *Socrates*) for since 'tis certain, that the Gods often hear our Prayers, there's nothing that requires more Prudence and Wisdom than to pray well; so as not to request Evils of 'em, while we think we are asking Goods; or not to ask Evils of 'em willingly and knowingly as *Oedipus* did, whom *Euripides* brings in Praying that his Children might decide their rights by the Sword.

You tell me of a mad Man (says *Alcibiades*) does any Man, who is in his senses make such Prayers as those to the Gods?

Hereupon *Socrates* asks him if being mad is not oppos'd to being Prudent: If Men are not wise or foolish, as they are either in Health or Sick: for as there is no Medium between Health and Sickness, neither is there any between Wisdom and Folly. To which *Alcibiades* agrees.

Since Madness then is oppos'd to Wisdom, says *Socrates*, Folly and Madness are but one and the same thing.

For one single Subject can't have two contraries oppos'd to it, and consequently every Fool is Mad. And seeing there are always a thousand Fools to one wise-Man in the World, while we live in it we are among mad Men.

The only thing that can militate against this Principle, is that it would be impossible to live among so great a Number of mad Men; and the wise, whose Number is but small, could never escape their Fury. And yet wise Men live in Cities, therefore it seems not true to say they live with mad Men. This is what *Socrates* objects against the Truth which he has made *Alcibiades* acknowledge : But he resolves this Difficulty in shewing that there are divers Degrees of Folly, as there are divers sorts of Diseases: The Fever is a Disease, but every Disease is not the Fever. 'Tis just so with Folly. All mad Men are Fools, but all Fools are not mad. A Disease is a Genius which comprehends many Species. Folly or Imprudence in like manner comprehends many Species, which differ in degree. As Men have divided Arts and Trades among 'em, so they have shar'd Folly among themselves too ; those who have the greatest share of it are said to be distracted and mad ; and they who have somewhat less are call'd Fools and stupid. But because Men seek to hide these Vices under specious Names, they call the former Men of Magnanimity, and of great Spirit ; and they call the others Simple, or else they say they are harmless Men, but have little Experience and much Youth. There are besides these a multitude of Names with which all sorts of Vice are disguis'd.

The next Question is in what Wisdom and Folly consist. A wise Man is one that knows what ought to be said and done, and a Fool is one that is ignorant of both. But is he that is thus ignorant, in this Condition without knowing it ? Yes certainly. *Oedipus*, for Instance (says *Socrates*) was in this Condition when he made that Prayer which we spoke of before ; but we shall find a great many others, who

who without being transported with Anger like him will request real Evils of God while they think they are asking real Goods. For as for *Oedipus*, if he did not ask for what was good neither did he think he ask'd it ; whereas others do the contrary. To begin with your self, *Alcibiades*: If the God to whom you are going to pray should suddenly appear to you, and ask you, if you would not be willing to be King of the Athenians, of all *Greece*, nay of all *Europe*, or (if that seem'd too little for your Ambition) of the whole World, would you not be extremely pleas'd, and return home with abundance of Joy, as one who had receiv'd the greatest Good in the World? Who would not be transported with such a thing as this? (replies *Alcibiades*.) But (says *Socrates*) would you give your Life for the Empire of the Greeks, or that of all the Barbarians together? No certainly (says *Alcibiades*) for then I could not enjoy it. But what if you could enjoy it, (continues *Socrates*) and this Enjoyment must needs prove fatal to you? No (says *Alcibiades*) I would not do it on that Condition.

You see by this therefore (says *Socrates*) that it is not safe to desire or accept what we know not. How many Men after they have passionately desir'd to be Kings, and have left no Stone unturn'd to obtain their End; have become the Sacrifices of their extravagant Ambition? The Story of *Archelaus* King of *Macedonia* is yet fresh in Memory. He ascended the Throne by his Crimes, and was assassinated by his Favourite, who could not maintain himself in it above 3 or 4 days; but was murder'd by a third who was ambitious to fill the same Place.

But without looking after foreign Examples, how many of the Generals of our Army have been condemn'd to Death in our own City! how many of 'em exil'd! and how many others have we seen, who after they had pass'd through innumerable Dangers, Toils and Labours, have fallen in the midst of their Triumphs, by the Calumnies of their Enemies! A great many other Persons, after they have ardent-

ly

ly desir'd Children, have been very unhappy in obtaining 'em. And thus it is with the rest of our Desires; and tho' nothing is more common than Instances of this kind, yet there's scarce any Man who would refuse the Thing he desires, if God should offer it to him, or who would cease to ask it, if he were sure to obtain it. And we may every Day see Persons repenting their former Prayers, and making such as are quite contrary to 'em. Therefore we must acknowledg the Truth of what *Homer* says, viz. That nothing is more unjust than the Complaints Men make against the Gods, whom they accuse of being the Cause of their Miseries, whereas they are the occasion of 'em themselves, who by their Folly draw down Mischiefs on their own Heads, which were not design'd for 'em.

A great Poet who knew the Ignorance of Mankind upon this Account, endeavour'd to cure it by giving 'em this Prayer, which I think is an admirable one. *Great God, who knowest better than we what is necessary for us, give us the good things we need, whether we ask 'em or not; and keep evil things from us, even when we ask 'em of thee.*

Then Ignorance is a very fatal thing (says *Alciades*) seeing it changes our Prayers into Curses, and prompts us to beg of God our own Miseries.

Hold a little, says *Socrates*, don't condemn Ignorance in General; if one sort of it is pernicious, there's another that is very useful. For instance, would not *Orestes* have been happy if he had not known his Mother, when he sought after her to kill her? For if he had not known her, he had not kill'd her, his design being only against her. So that this kind of Ignorance would have been very good for him: There is an Ignorance then (says he) which ought to be commended; and this he proves with great Evidence. And now he lays down this as a Principle, that all the Sciences in the World without that by which we know what is very good, are not

not only useless, but most commonly extremely dangerous.

'Tis not sufficient (says he) that in the Council of a Prince, or of a Republick, there be Men of Ability in every thing that relates to Peace, War, and all other things belonging to Politicks, if they are not expert in the knowledg of what is very good; that is if they are not under the Direction of the Divine Spirit, and do not well understand what is best, and most just, they are incapable of governing a State well; so that nothing but Injustice and Discord will be seen to reign in it. For while these Ministers think they know what indeed they do not understand, and continually suffer themselves to be led by Opinion, and not by knowledg, they never judg aright but by Accident. They are like Ships well stor'd with every thing needful for a long Voyage; but which for want of a Pilot can't choose but be lost in a little time. It would be much more useful for these Men to be ignorant of what they know, provided they were convinc'd of their Ignorance; for then they would not intrude themselves to give Counsel in things which they don't understand, and yet think they do. Therefore that Soul, that City or that Republick that would be happy must acquire this Science, which alone makes others turn to a good Account; without it, the greater Fortune either particular Men or States enjoy, the more impossible it is for 'em not to commit very great Crimes, either in acquiring Riches or augmenting their Forces, or the like. Without this Science a Man may have all others and yet never be the better for 'em: And to such a one that Verse which *Homer* made against *Margites* may be apply'd.

He knew many things, but knew them all amiss.
For this wise and divine Poet does not mean by this, that he did not know 'em well, as if one could properly know amiss what one knows; but signifies by this Enigmatical Expression, that he knew 'em all unhappily, or that it is was a great Unhappiness

pineness to him to know 'em. For where the knowledge of God is not, there is no Good. And if these Sciences are unhappy to us, 'twould be better for us to be ignorant of 'em, and consequently there is a sort of Ignorance more useful than the Sciences. This is still more true in Prayer than in all the other Actions of Life. And 'tis better to ask nothing of God, than to ask what is Evil of him, when we think we are asking Good, and consequently the Prayer I have been speaking of is the most perfect of all others.

Upon this Model the Prayer of the Lacedemonians was form'd; Who are content to say, *Lord, grant us what seems good and comely to thee.* They never request any thing but this, and yet are the happiest People in the World. To this purpose *Socrates* relates a Story which he had heard told by some old People. He says, the Athenians having been often overcome in the Wars they had with the Lacedemonians, resolv'd to send to the Oracle of *Jupiter Ammon*, to know the Reason why the Gods rather favour'd the *Lacedemonians* than the *Athenians* who offer'd 'em more Sacrifices, erected more Temples and Statues in their Honour, and made 'em more Presents, and more magnificent Oblations than all the Greeks together. Whereas the Lacedemonians were so guilty of Avarice in their Worship, that they scarce sacrific'd any Beasts but what were blemish'd, and mutilated; tho they were very Rich. The Prophet answer'd 'em in a few Words. *The Benedictions of the Lacedemonians are more agreeable to Jupiter than all the Sacrifices of the Greeks.* He calls their Prayers *Benedictions*. So that the Lacedemonians were belov'd of God, because they knew how to pray; whereas the rest of the Greeks were hated of him, because they did not understand how to offer Sacrifice. And *Homer* (says he) signifies the same thing, when he says the *Trojans*, when they built a Fort, offer'd whole *Hecatombes* to the Gods, the smoke of which ascended to Heaven,

Heaven, but the Gods refus'd to accept 'em because they hated the sacred City of Troy, King Priamus, and his People. The Occasion of this hatred, was because the *Trojans* knew not how to pray, but would have oblig'd God by their Sacrifices to do, not his own Will, but theirs. But God suffers not himself to be corrupted by Gifts like a Usurer; and that man must be a Fool, who thinks to obtain his Favour by such Sacrifices as the Wicked are better able to offer than the Righteous. God only regards the Sanctity and Purity of the Soul, and esteems nothing but Justice and Wisdom. Now none are truly Just and Wise but those who know how to perform their Duty toward God and Men both in their Words and Actions. What do you think of all this, *Alcibiades*?

Alcibiades struck with the Evidence of these Truths, answers, that he is not so senseless, as to oppose his weak Understanding to that of God, and to contradict his Oracles.

Then don't be in so much haste, *Alcibiades*, (continues *Socrates*) to offer your Prayers, lest God to punish you, should answer the Imprecations you are going to utter against your self: For you are not a Man likely to use the Prayer of the Lacedemonians; you are too proud, for that is the softest name I can give your Imprudence; therefore wait till you are better instructed how to demean your self, both toward God and Men.

Alas! When shall I be instructed in this? (replies *Alcibiades*) and who shall be my Master? what Pleasure I should take in obeying him!

It must be he who takes care of you (says *Socrates*) and who truly loves you; that is God, 'tis he that must teach you to pray well. But before he communicates to you this Knowledge of what is very good, which alone can make you discern what is your true Good, and suggest such Prayers to you as will be for your Advantage, he must dissipate the Darkness that beclouds your Soul; as *Minerva*, in
Homer,

Homer, dispell'd the Mist that cover'd *Diomedes* his Eyes, and hinder'd him from distinguishing God from Man. For while we are destitute of the knowledge of God, we are incapable, either of understanding him, or of following him, and consequently 'tis impossible for us to pray well.

Let him scatter then, (replies *Alcibiades*) let him destroy this Darkness of mine; I abandon my self to his Conduct: and till that happy day comes, which, if it please God, I shall not be long expecting, I'll defer my Prayers and my Sacrifice. In the mean time give me leave to express my Thanks to you, for your wise Counsel, by putting this Crown on your head which I wear on mine.

I readily accept that Favour (says *Socrates*) and as in the *Phenicians of Euripides*, *Creon* seeing *Tiresias* coming to him with a Crown of Gold, which was the first Fruits of the Spoil of the Enemy, and with which the Athenians had honour'd him for his Art, said, *I take your Crown, which is the sign of Victory, for a good Omen, for you see we are also in a great storm of War.* So I must say I take the Honour, I now receive at your hands for a happy Preface; for I am engag'd in no less a Conflict than *Creon*; while I am endeavouring to gain the Victory over all your Lovers.

THE
 ABRIDGMENT
 Of *EUTYPHRON*,
 OR
 Of Holiness.

EUtyphron meets *Socrates* in the Kings Porch, which was a Place on the right Hand of the *Ceramique*, where one of the IX Archons, who was call'd the King presided during his year. Surpriz'd at this Novelty, (for it was the first time that *Socrates* had appear'd in this place) he asks him what it was that could oblige him to leave *Lyceus* to come into this Porch. For 'tis not likely (says he) that you have any Process here before the King, as I have. 'Tis worse than that, (says *Socrates*) the Business I have is that which the Athenians call an *Accusation*. How (says *Eutyphron*) does any one accuse you then? For I can't imagine that you would accuse any Body. *Eutyphron* who is going to accuse his own Father, can't believe that *Socrates* would accuse any Man; of such a strange piece of Extravagance, and of so found an Opinion of himself is a superstitious Man capable. And *Plato* improves [this with a great deal of Address to insinuate that at *Athens* honest Men never follow'd the Trade of Accusers.

Socrates says, he accus'd no Body. Who is it that accuses you then? (says *Eutyphron*) I don't very well know him (says *Socrates*) he is a young Man: And not content to tell him his Name and the Place of his Birth, he draws, his Picture; which is that of

of a Man whose Physiognomy Promises nothing of Good: He has, says he, Lank Hair, a Thin Beard, and a Crooked Nose. All these Marks can't make him known. This young Man (continues *Socrates*) like a great Politician, has caus'd me to be cited before the City as our common Mother, and accuses me of forging new Gods and rejecting the old.

Oh (says *Eutyphron*) I perceive what the Matter is, because you say you have a familiar Genius, a God that conducts you, *Melitus* accuses you of introducing new Opinions, knowing very well that all such things as these are suspected by the common People, who are always ready to receive Accusations of this kind. What do not I suffer, when I speak of divine Things in the Assemblies, and am predicting what shall come to pass! The People laugh at me as if I were a Fool: Not that any thing that I have foretold has fail'd of its Accomplishment? but 'tis because they naturally envy all such as we are.

My dear *Eutyphron*, (replies *Socrates*) perhaps 'tis no such great Misfortune to be laugh'd at. The Athenians don't much trouble their Heads about a Man's Ability, provided he concerns not himself to teach others what he knows; but if any one makes a Profession of teaching, they are downright angry with him, either out of Envy, as you say, or for some other Reason which we know not. I don't at all desire (says *Eutyphron*) to make tryal (as you have done) to my Cost, what Sentiments the Athenians have of me.

There's a great deal of difference (replies *Socrates*, improving this Confession of *Eutyphron* to show, in the Person of this Diviner, the Character of those that presided to teach Religion, viz. that they taught nothing, but through fear left the People in ignorance) perhaps you are very reserv'd and refuse to teach what you know; whereas I fear the Athenians will think the love I bear to all Mankind induces me to tell 'em too freely all I know, without asking any Reward of 'em. But if they would only

only laugh at me (as I said just now) as you say they do at you, it would be no very troublesome or unpleasant thing to pass a few hours in laughing and jesting. But if they take up the Matter in earnest; then 'tis only for such Diviners as you to know what will be the Event.

It may be (says *Eutyphron* like a great Diviner) you'll sustain no Damage by it, and I hope you'll have a happy Issue of your Business, as well as I of mine.

Then you have some Business here, (replies *Socrates*) are you Plaintiff or Defendant? I am Plaintiff, says *Eutyphron*. Whom do you prosecute (says *Socrates*) I prosecute my Father (says th'other) your Father, good God! (says *Socrates*) and what is the Accusation then? Of what do you accuse your Father? I accuse him of Murder, (replies *Eutyphron*.) Of Murder! (says *Socrates*) That indeed is an Accusation above the reach of the People, who will never comprehend that it can be Just. For this is not an Attempt for an ordinary Man, but for one who is arriv'd to the utmost pitch of Wisdom.

You say true, *Socrates*, (replies *Eutyphron*) deluded by this Commendation. But (says the other) is it any one of your Relations that your Father has killed? without doubt (continues he) it must be so, for you would not bring your Father before a Court of Justice, if he had only kill'd a Stranger.

What an Absurdity is that (says *Eutyphron*) to think there's a difference in this respect between a Relation and a Stranger: The Case is equal; the only thing to be regarded is the Justice or Injustice of the Action; for if the Action be evil you are oblig'd to prosecute the Author of it, whatever Friendship or Relation is between you; for you render your self an Accomplice of his Crime to have the least Familiarity with him, and not to endeavour to bring him to punishment, which alone can purge and expiate you both. But to apprize you of the Fact, the Deceased was one of our Farmers, when we liv'd at

Naxus, he held a piece of Land of us; one Day having drank too much he fell into a Passion with one of our Slaves, and knock'd him o'th' Head: My Father put him into a deep Pit, bound Hand and Foot, and sent hither to consult those who have the Inspection of all Matters of Religion, and Cases of Conscience, to know what he should do, and during all this time neglected the poor Prisoner, as an Assassin whose Life was of no consequence; and so he dyed; Hunger, Thirst and the weight of his Irons kill'd him, before the return of the Messenger that my Father sent. Upon this the whole Family is mightily disturb'd at me, because for the sake of an Assassin I accuse my Father of Murder, which they pretend he has not committed: and if he had committed it, they maintain that I ought not to prosecute him, seeing the Deceased was a Villain and a Murderer; besides that 'tis an Impious Action for a Son to bring a criminal Process against his Father; so ignorant are they of Divine Things, and so incapable of discerning what is Profane and Impious from what is Just and Holy.

Socrates amaz'd at a Position so presumptuous and false, asks him if he thinks he so exactly knows all Divine Things, and can so precisely distinguish that which is holy from that which is profane; that the Case being as he relates it, he can prosecute his Father without fearing to commit an Impious Act.

Eutyphron, like a Superstitious Bigot, who despises all the World beside, and thinks he sees more clearly into Matters of Religion than any Body else, answers, What Advantage should I have above other Men, if I did not very exactly know all these things?

Socrates feigns himself extremely pleas'd that he had found a Man of so clear a Head and so great Abilities, who might give him so much assistance in the troublesome Affair in which *Melitus* had engag'd him; and earnestly conjures him to teach him what is properly holy, and what profane; and to give him such

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a just Idea of both, as may always enable him to distinguish 'em with certainty.

Eutyphron here still keeps his Character very well. That is holy (says he) which I am doing, namely to prosecute in a Court of Judicature every one that commits Murder, Sacrilege, or any other unjust Act of the like Nature, without any distinction; Let it be Father, Mother, Brother; &c. 'Tis the same thing.

This Definition, which springs rather from blind Zeal, than the knowledg of Holiness, not satisfying *Socrates*, *Eutyphron* attempts to prove it by Authority. He maintains that all Religion consisting in imitating the Gods, he could not do a more pious and holy thing than to prosecute his own Father, seeing *Jupiter* put *Saturn* in Chains because he devour'd his Children; and *Saturn* himself had treated *Cælus* with yet more Rigour for some other Fault.

Socrates insinuates that he doubts of the truth of these Stories, because even Reason teaches us not to attribute any unworthy thing to the Deity. However (says he ironically to *Eutyphron* after his usual manner) if you, who are so able a Man in Religious Matters, agree with the Common People in this, and believe these Traditions as well as they, 'tis absolutely necessary that I should believe 'em too, I who am but ignorant in these things. Therefore I entreat you in the Name of that God who presides over Friendship, do not deceive me, but tell me if you believe that there ever were such things, as you have been relating.

This Bigot who is always credulous and conceited, makes no scruple not only to say, that he believes it, but adds that he believes things yet more surprizing, of which the Common People are ignorant, meaning without doubt the Mysteries that were known only to those that were Initiated; and maintains all the Fables of Poets and Fancies of Painters as fundamental Points of Religion.

The Abridgment of Eutyphron.

Socrates does not trouble himself with the Confutation of 'em ; that would finish the Dispute too soon, and he is not willing to offend him. Therefore he proceeds to ask him, as if he were willing to be instructed by him, what it is that he calls pious and holy, and desires him to give a clear and distinct Idea by which he may judg of every thing that is pious and holy. For a true Definition ought to make known the Essence and Nature of that which is defin'd.

Eutyphron answers, that it is that which is pleasing to the Gods, and consequently that that is profane and impious which is displeasing to 'em.

Socrates takes advantage of this Definition, and shows that the Gods being often divided among themselves, their Quarrels must needs arise from their disagreement about what is just or unjust; profane or holy. And that according to this, one and the same thing is holy and profane, seeing it pleases some of 'em and displeases others. Therefore the Definition of holy and profane can't subsist with the Plurality of Gods.

This Consequence is certain, and would be sufficient to reclaim a wise Man from that Error, and to convince him that there is but one God. But *Eutyphron* preserves his Character better than so. 'Tis no such easy matter to undeceive a superstitious Man. To elude this Consequence he engages to prove that the Action of his Father was displeasing to all the Gods, and that his was agreeable to 'em.

Socrates does not press him with the Absurdity of this Persuasion, which is rather a Supposition than a Certainty. For since their Theologie acknowledges that the Gods are very often contesting about Matters of this Nature, how could *Eutyphron* be certain that they agreed about the Action he was going to undertake ? In an Affair of this Consequence a greater Certainty is requisite than that which arises from Opinion : It was very easy by this Means to reduce him to an Absurdity : but *Socrates* takes another

ther course to expose the Ignorance of the Man still more; and thereby to overthrow a Religion which had no better Props than these. Therefore he convinces him that this Definition is not perfect.

Eutyphron thinks to rectifie it by saying, that which is Holy is what pleases all the Gods; But *Socrates* answers, that this is only to explain one of the Properties of a holy Thing, instead of discovering the Essence of it. He does not ask if that which is Holy is belov'd of the Gods, no Body doubts of that: He would know why it is lov'd, and what it is that renders it worthy of Love. For if that which is holy, and that which is belov'd of the Gods were the same thing; since the Gods love that which is holy only because it is holy, they would love that which they love only because it was belov'd of 'em. And on the other hand, if that which is belov'd of the Gods were belov'd of 'em only because they love it, it would follow that the Gods love without reason, and that that which is holy would be holy only because it was belov'd. In a word, (he says) there is a great deal of difference between these 2 Terms, *Holy* and *Belov'd of the Gods*, and they are entirely opposite. For one Man is lov'd only because they love him, and another is lov'd, because he deserves to be lov'd. That is to say, That which is Holy is belov'd of the Gods only because it is Holy, but 'tis not Holy because 'tis belov'd of them. The Matter in hand therefore is to explain the Nature of that which is Holy, and not its Qualities, and to define what it is and why the Gods love it. This is very perplexing to a superstitious Man, who continually takes up things without Examination, and believes a thing only because he believes it.

Eutyphron does not dissemble his Trouble but confesses that his Thoughts are fluctuating, and that he knows not how to fix 'em.

Socrates to make the Matter (which is very serious) a little pleasant, takes occasion from it to speak of the Works of *Dedalus*, who made moveable Statues,

tues, which never stood still but when a certain spring which they had was tyed and stop'd. He let's *Eutyphron* know that his Principles are as moveable as these Statues. The Governing Spring is not yet stop'd, but is continually going, his meaning is, that *Eutyphron* spoke by Opinion, and not at all by Science. To help him out therefore he asks him if he does not think that which is Holy is Just. To this *Eutyphron* agrees: Next to this the Question is, whether that which is Holy is a part of that which is Just, or that which is Just a part of that which is Holy. 'Tis soon decided that what is Just is the Genus and what is Holy the Species. For there are many things Just which are not Holy; but none Holy which are not Just. So that what is Just has a larger extent than what is Holy.

Nothing now remains but to know what part of that which is Just that which is Holy is; *Eutyphron* says, 'tis that part of Justice which respects the Gods, and the Care of their Worship, and that the other part concerns Men only.

This Answer throws 'em into another Difficulty, and that is how to know in what this Religious Care consists, and whether it be of the Nature of all other Cares, which tend to the Profit of that which is car'd for. For if so, our Holiness must render the Gods better and more excellent, which would be an impious Thought.

Eutyphron answers, that 'tis a Care like that which Servants take of their Masters: Holiness then (says *Socrates*) is a kind of Servant to the Gods: But what do the Gods do by the Ministry of this Servant? For as Physicians operate Health by the Ministry of their Art; the Gods must needs operate something by the Ministry of our Holiness. Now what is it that they operate? *Eutyphron* answers, that they engage us to please them by our Prayers and Sacrifices, and that Holiness and Piety consist in this on which the Welfare of Families and Republicks depends. As on the contra-

ry Impiety is the ruin, both of particular Persons and States.

Socrates collects from this indefinite Answer, that Holiness is the Art of sacrificing and praying. To sacrifice is to give, and to pray is to ask. So that Holiness consists in giving and asking. Such things only are ask'd as are wanted, and such things only given as are necessary to those to whom they are given; for it would be ridiculous to give a thing which they have no occasion for.

From hence he draws this Conclusion, that Holiness is a Traffick between God and Man. But what profit can God receive from our Offerings? For as for us 'tis very visible what profit we receive from him, since we have not the least Good but what proceeds from his Bounty: Are we then so crafty (says he) to draw all the Advantage of this Commerce to our selves only, so that God gets nothing by it?

Eutyphron press'd with this Argument; shuts up all in saying, that God leaves what is profitable to us, and contents himself with that which is pleasant; and that 'tis our Respect, and Gratitude that is so pleasant to him; which returns exactly to the former Definition; that that is Holy which is pleasing to the Gods.

Socrates shows him, that he has hitherto only made a Circle, and entreats him not to refuse him the knowledg of so great a good. But *Eutyphron* like a true Votary of Superstition, who is always presumptuous, and never confesses his Ignorance, seeks only how to get rid of him, and refers this Enquiry to another time, telling him some urgent Business calls him elsewhere.

Thus ends this Dialogue, which destroys the false Opinions which then reign'd in the World, without establishing the true. The Death of *Socrates* occasion'd *Plato* to write thus imperfectly and sparingly. Besides this is his Method, he always refutes before he teaches. But his manner of refuting fails not to make a discovery by way of Anticipa-

icipation of what he designs to establish, and does maintain elsewhere. Here we see the superstitious Man is always near the Truth, but never reaches it. 'Tis certain that Holiness is pleasing to God, 'tis certain likewise that it produces a kind of Commerce between God and Men, and that this consists in Giving and Asking; but the ignorant Athenians conceiv'd this after too gross a manner.

Holiness can't be in us without Conversion, nor Conversion without Love, and this Love engages us to give our selves entirely God, and to ask of him to give himself to us, that he may keep alive in us that divine Flame which purifies our Souls, and makes us resemble him. In this consists that Commerce between God and Men, which makes up the whole of Religion, as *Socrates* and *Plato* both acknowledg'd.



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